The Millers of Haddington, Dunbar and Dunfermline, by W. J. Couper

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THE MILLERS OF HADDINGTON, DUNBAR AND DUNFERMLINE

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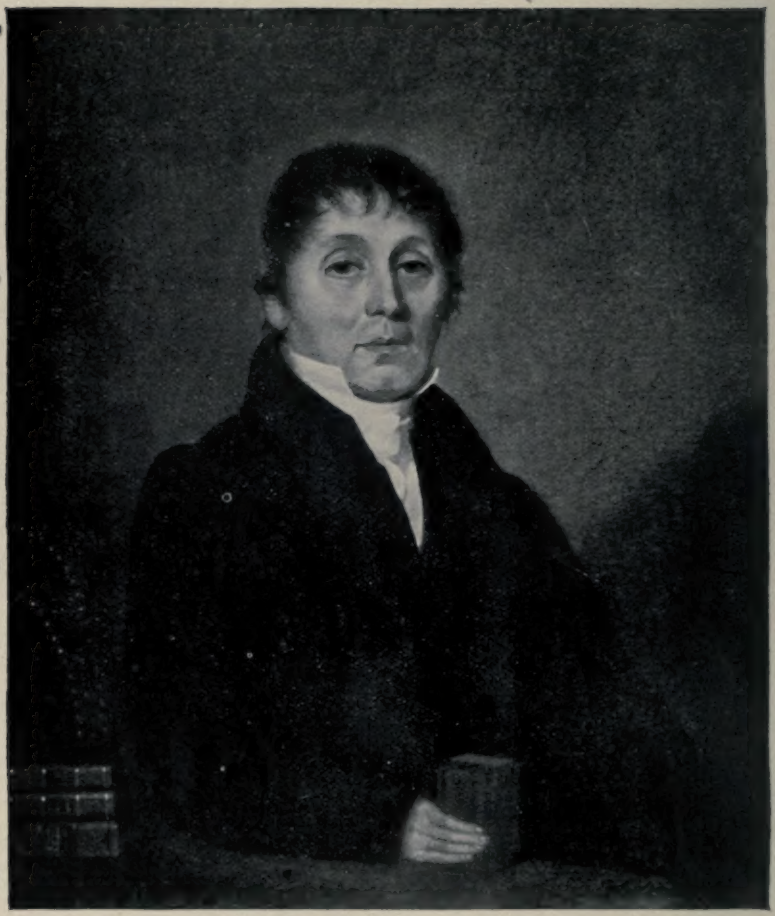
TO

ISABEL HALL UNWIN



GEORGE MILLER, DUNBAR.

From a painting ascribed to Mungo Burton, A.R.S.A.

Frontispiece.

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THE MILLERS OF HADDINGTON, DUNBAR AND DUNFERMLINE

A RECORD OF SCOTTISH BOOKSELLING

BY

W. J. COUPER, M.A.

AUTHOR OF "THE EDINBURGH PERIODICAL PRESS," ETC.

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T. FISHER UNWIN
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PREFACE

IT is curious that amid the multitude of books written on the history of British literature, little attention should have been given to the agencies by means of which the printed book reached the hands of those for whom it was prepared. Booksellers and bookselling have been almost entirely neglected. "No great trade," says Mr. Augustine Birrell, "has an obscurer history than the book trade. It seems to lie choked in mountains of dust which it would be suicidal to disturb. Men have lived from time to time of literary skill—Dr. Johnson was one of them—who had knowledge, extensive and peculiar, of the traditions and practices of 'the trade,' as it is proudly styled by its votaries; but nobody has ever thought it worth while to make record of his knowledge, which accordingly

perished with him, and is now irrecoverably lost." Books like those of Charles Knight, Curwen, and Mr. Frank A. Mumby have done something to remove the reproach. Monographs on isolated periods and workers have appeared, and there is much promise in the patient researches of the learned societies devoted to the history of book production. But on the whole the field is practically unworked.

The case of Scotland is considerably worse than that of England. The great publishers of the northern kingdom have indeed been dealt with more or less adequately, and histories of the chief members of the firms of Blackwood, Black, Chambers, Constable, Ballantyne, and Blackie have been written. Even lives of Scotsmen who have settled in London, like Daniel Macmillan and Alexander Strahan, have been published. Printers also have not been altogether overlooked, although there are only two biographies that can be called important —those of Thomas Ruddiman and William Smellie. In both cases it is probable that the books were written because their subjects were men of prominence in learning rather than because they were printers. But literature devoted

to the work of booksellers is almost non-existent. The nature and extent of the business carried on in Edinburgh by the well-known bookseller, William Creech, can be learned from his own writings and from the biography recently published, but the only other firm that has been made the subject of even a respectable magazine article is that of the Morrisons of Perth, who, it should be noted, were also printers and publishers. This surely is unfortunate, because as a class booksellers have done much for the communities in which they have carried on their business. Limited as their opportunities were, they shared with the minister and the schoolmaster the credit of spreading what culture there was in many a country district.

There is room therefore for every attempt to throw light on the book trade of Scotland, and the present volume is offered as a contribution towards its history. It deals with a distinct phase of the business—that carried on in the country districts. The period covered by the book was one of transition. A new spirit was beginning to breathe over the land, and men were no longer content to have their thinking done for them. Even in remote villages the stirring was felt and

a demand for books could not be long delayed. How the necessary publications reached these places must be of interest, not only for its literary meaning, but also from the effects the spread of literature had upon the social conditions of the people. None throughout Scotland played a greater part in this work of providing and popularizing literature among the common people than the Millers of Dunbar and Haddington, and for that reason alone it is proper that some record should be made of their life story.

The Miller family also deserves some memorial on its own account. More than one member of it had the literary instinct. A man of tireless energy and of considerable fertility of resource, George Miller did more than merely sell books. Within his own limits he was a social reformer. He endeavoured to educate the tastes of his customers, and to aid the cause of literary culture wrote books which in their day had a fair reputation. His son, James, was a poet and historian of some distinction, and in a county that numbers among its natives comparatively few men of literary eminence, his position is of importance.

Preface

If further justification were needed for the appearance of this volume it can be found in the fact that the publishing tradition of the Miller family has not yet died out, but is being continued in the person of Mr. T. Fisher Unwin, at whose suggestion the preparation of the book was undertaken.

I am indebted to Mr. T. Fisher Unwin for various memoranda and for placing at my disposal his collection of books from the Miller Press, which are described in *Notes and Queries* for July 3 and 17 and November 6, 1909. The Registrar-General for Scotland, the town clerks of Haddington, Dunbar, and Dunfermline, as well as the clerks to the parish councils of the first two towns, kindly gave me permission to inspect public documents under their care. Provost Low of Dunbar did what he could to help me in my researches. Many correspondents willingly answered questions I addressed to them, or furnished clues which when followed up yielded some interesting facts. No descendants of George Miller can be traced, but important material was gleaned from his "Latter Struggles." Miller was most methodical in the way he kept papers and documents connected with his life and

business. Unfortunately all these seem to have disappeared with the exception of an autobiography compiled from them in 1831–3, two volumes of which, extending to over seventeen hundred closely written pages, came unexpectedly into my hands in the course of my researches. They bring Miller's life down to 1819, and though filled with much irrelevant matter, furnished very valuable information. Interesting notes regarding the Dunfermline branch of the family were sent to me by Mr. George L. Miller, of New York, a grandson of John Miller.

The bibliographies in the appendix do not claim to be exhaustive. Many of the books published by the East Lothian Press and by the press in Dunfermline were of such a kind that whole editions of them were likely to disappear. I am indebted to Dr. Erskine Beveridge for kindly allowing me to extract the list of the products of the latter press from his laborious work, "The Bibliography of Dunfermline and the West of Fife," and to arrange the titles in chronological order.

The frontispiece portrait of George Miller is from a painting in the possession of Mrs. Stobie, of Glasgow, a near relative of the Millers, who

kindly allowed it to be reproduced. The artist is said to have been Mungo Burton, who in early life painted many portraits and died an Associate of the Royal Scottish Academy. No portrait of James Miller could be obtained. He had an invincible repugnance to having his picture taken, and the only sketch known to have been made of him has disappeared. The portraits of John Miller, Dunfermline, and his wife are taken from water-colour drawings lent for the purpose by their granddaughter, Miss Lyle of Edinburgh. The artist is Henry Gilbert. The picture of John Laing Miller is from a painting, artist unknown, and that of his wife from a pencil sketch done by Amelia Paton, sister of Sir Noel Paton, and wife of D. O. Hill, the artist. She was a sculptress of some note, and was on friendly terms with the Millers. For the first of these I am indebted to his son, Mr. Robert Miller, of Boston, Mass., U.S.A., and for the second to her grandson, Mr. Moncrieff Wood, of Finchley, London.

The woodcuts which figure as tail-pieces and other ornaments are reproduced from illustrations in books published by the East Lothian Press. Several are printed directly from the original

blocks made for the Millers : the titles of these are marked with an asterisk in the Table of Illustrations. For their use in this book the author is greatly indebted to Mr. Thomas Cowan, Haddington, who acquired the business formerly carried on by the Millers, and who wrote the first and till now the only account of James Miller. It is prefixed to the edition of the "Lamp of Lothian," published in 1900. Cordial thanks are also due to Mr. J. M'Kenzie, Dunbar, the owner of No. 1 of the *Cheap Magazine* and the Greathead Lifeboat picture, for giving permission to have them photographed ; to Mr. T. T. Bisset, Dunbar, for the photographs from which the plates facing pp. 57 and 117 were made ; and to Mr. John Anderson, Dunbar, for freely granting the use of his copyright photograph of the High Street.

Last of all I have to express my obligations to Mr. T. Fisher Unwin for his readiness to meet my wishes, and to my friends, the Rev. E. H. Fraser, M.A., and Mr. Robert Weir, for reading the MS. and furnishing me with valuable hints.

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* Printed from the original blocks used in the East Lothian Press.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTORY—DUNBAR—THE MILLER FAMILY

THERE were few towns in Scotland at the close of the eighteenth century that seemed less fitted than Dunbar for carrying on an extensive trade in books. For many years it had been looked upon as a decayed and broken-down burgh whose great days were in the past. Among the first to disparage it was Fynes Moryson, who in 1598 wrote that although it had been a place of some importance, yet when he saw it, "it lay ruined and seemed of little moment, as well from the poverty as the small

number of inhabitants." Half a century later, Tucker, the commissioner sent by Cromwell to report on the harbours of Scotland, would deny it the name of a town altogether, saying that "village" would describe it better, and adding that "all the townes of Scotland, unless the burgh townes deserve noe other appellation, did not use and custome of speech give them a bigger title." Other travellers during the seventeenth century speak after the same manner. In 1745 an officer of the Duke of Cumberland, while testifying to the lavish hospitality the town council extended to the different regiments that passed through the burgh, yet sneers at them and their town. "They had," he said, "a tablecloth so dirty that at other times I should with great reluctance have wiped my hands upon it."

Nor does the appearance of the town to-day do much to remove this impression of decay from the mind of the visitor. Modern suburbs have indeed begun to grow up, but the heart of the town remains the same. "The small town of Dunbar," says Carlyle, who made personal inspection of the district when writing his "Cromwell," "stands, high and windy, looking down over its herring-boats, over its grim old

Castle now much honeycombed—on one of those projecting rock-promontories with which that shore of the Frith of Forth is niched and vandyked, as far as the eye can reach. A beautiful sea; good land too, now that the plougher understands his trade; a grim niched barrier of whinstone sheltering it from the chafings and tumblings of the big blue German Ocean." The houses lie chiefly on a slope that sinks rapidly down from the general level of the land behind to this rocky shore, and their situation has exposed them to every blast that blows. The masonry of the quaint old wind-swept streets is everywhere weathered and scarred as if the town had become worn and exhausted by the continuous struggle against the elements.

And yet it was in this place that George Miller succeeded in building up a trade in books that for a time rivalled some of the largest businesses in the capital. To become a merchant on an extensive scale in the burgh along any line of trade seemed impossible. During its long history Dunbar had produced only one firm of more than a local reputation. As general merchants the Falls had extended their business widely—or

as Miller puts it, "were well known from the upper end of the Mediterranean to the Baltic, and in my early days made much noise in the world"—and had attained not only to civic but to parliamentary honours. The spirit of the place, however, had ultimately fallen upon them. Before Miller had been long in business they had departed, leaving not a trace of their presence behind them except their huge mansion-house, which to this day dominates the chief street of the town.

Especially for success in bookselling did Dunbar appear an impossible centre.[1] It seemed to be too near Edinburgh. The English coaches did indeed pass through it, but little could be expected from them. Travellers were not likely to wait till they reached it to supply their wants. Edinburgh on the one side was the literary metropolis of the country, and on the other Berwick did a fair business in books. Nor could much be looked for from the districts surrounding the town. The year after Miller began business on his own account an "accurate survey" was made of the county, when it was found that

[1] Even to-day the town has no public library or reading-room.

the population of the town and parish of Dunbar amounted to 3,700. The number of persons living within a radius of ten miles did not exceed 8,000. The vast majority of these were unlikely ever to become customers at a bookshop. And yet Miller achieved what seemed impossible. He began with no capital, and after twenty-five years in business could value his stock at over £10,000.

The family to which George Miller belonged was of the yeoman class, and for generations had been engaged on the land. His grandfather was born about the close of the seventeenth century at Gifford Hall, an ancient name for Gifford, one of several places that claim John Knox as their son. He married Isabel Wilson, a native of Dunbar, and so brought the town into the fortunes of the family. One of his sons migrated to London, where he settled down, dying as late as 1815. His line is represented to-day in Mr. T. Fisher Unwin, the well-known publisher.

George's father was born at Dirleton in 1725, but early in life came to reside in Dunbar, where he started and carried on till his death the business of a general merchant. His son says that he

had little connection with books. Apart from his "little stock of stationery," he could provide only "catechisms and the Proverbs of Solomon, children's books in all the glory of richly ornamented covers and children's pictures in variety." He was a man of profound religious convictions, and on conscientious grounds left the Established Church and threw in his lot with the Secession. Much of his son George's piety can be traced to his example. In addition to being a merchant he occasionally acted as a master of works for the town council, and several public improvements were carried out under his direction. He died on June 27, 1789, being survived by three sons and two daughters.

John, the youngest child, afterwards became a bookseller and printer in Dunfermline.[1] James, the eldest, followed the occupation of his father, and really succeeded him in his business. For a time he was in partnership with his brother George, the subject of this notice, but for the greater part of his life he carried on business on his own account. Beyond the ordinary stock laid in by a country merchant he did not deal

[1] For an account of this John Miller and the business he set up in Fifeshire, see Chapter XVII.

specially in books, although for a time he conducted a juvenile circulating library. He took an active and prominent share in the affairs of the Secession congregation of the town, and for many years sat in the town council of the burgh, being for several terms a magistrate. He died in 1851.

Only one of James's sons, John Kemp Miller, showed a taste for books. He was born in 1812, and entered as a student of the United Secession Church in 1834. It was not till the 21st of May, 1844, that he was settled over a congregation at Catrine in Ayrshire. His ministry proved unfortunate, for he had to resign his charge in less than two years, his demission taking effect on February 24, 1846. No reason is assigned for the step in the records either of the Presbytery or of the congregation, but it is understood that he disagreed with his people over some of the developments of the Chartist movement then in progress. Whatever was the cause, the Presbytery formally recorded their sympathy with him in the position he took up. They stated that his reasons for retiring "appear to be well founded," and named him "a brother highly esteemed." He never succeeded in obtaining

another appointment, and preached only occasionally. He wrote a little for the press, but his life was lived in practical retirement. He resided first in Edinburgh, but latterly at Dunbar, where he died on March 31, 1895.

OLD CHURCH OF NORTH BERWICK.
(From "St. Baldred of the Bass.")

GEORGE MILLER

CHAPTER II

CHILDHOOD AND APPRENTICESHIP

GEORGE MILLER was born on January 14, 1771. His mother was Elizabeth Wilson, the daughter of a Dunbar wright and the second wife of her husband. "I might say," he wrote, "that disappointment shook hands with me on my entrance into life, and marked me for her own from the moment of my birth." The first Monday of the year was then kept in Scotland as a day of festivity perhaps more frequently than now. Presents were bestowed on children and others, and it was accordingly called "Hansel Monday." The changes made in 1752 in the method of reckoning time, whereby eleven days were dropped from the calendar, had not been accepted by all, and the day was consequently observed on different dates even in the same locality. According to the old style Miller was born on the auspicious anniversary,

but his parents did not recognize the day, being what he calls "New Style Folks." He had therefore "come into the world a week too late for the feast"—an unhappy mischance which he was inclined to regard as the beginning of a life of misfortune.

But even that was not the only adverse circumstance that accompanied his birth. He "arrived in these regions," he adds, "just upon the eve of what has been distinguished as the 'Black Spring of 1771'"—a name he borrows from Dr. Johnson. That there was scarcity and want in the land he supports by a quotation from Gilbert White of Selborne: "At the end of March the face of the earth was naked to a surprising degree; wheat hardly to be seen, and no sign of any grass; turnips all gone, and sheep in a starving way; and all provisions rising in price." But though the land thus suffered, there is no evidence that either the infant or the family into which he had come experienced any hardship from the bad season. One favourable circumstance Miller did discover in his birth year. It was the year in which Henry Mackenzie published his famous "Man of Feeling," a book that was for many a long day regarded as reach-

ing the high-water mark of Scottish authorship. Miller describes it as "a dish well seasoned and accommodated to my palate before that palate was in sufficient readiness to receive it, or had sufficient relish to appropriate its sweets." He traces to its early perusal the love he afterwards developed for literature and philosophy.

Miller's first real misfortune was the death of his mother, which took place on the 9th of October, 1776, when he was in his sixth year. He retained only two recollections of her. One of them was certainly pathetic. "I recall," he says, "the affecting circumstances of standing a voluntary sentinel over my mother's coffin, forbidding the profane touch of any of my little comrades to come in contact with it, while old James Gray was in the act of preparing it in his shop."

Miller's schooldays began about 1776, and his first school was that conducted by an infant mistress of the ancient type, an old lady whose equipment for her profession was none of the best. Dunbar had several schools under the direction of the burgh council, and to each of these George thereafter went in turn. He gives a list of the books that formed the basis of the

curriculum in the second school he attended :— "Catechisms, Proverbs of Solomon, spelling book, Æsop's 'Fables,' Mason's 'Selections,' and the Bible"—a list which in some respects was more liberal than many to be found in contemporary schools. He had his share of Latin in the next school, but it does not appear to have made much impression on his mind if we may judge from the mistakes he makes in the few words he uses from that language. His last teacher bore the name of Cottman, and with him he continued till the autumn of 1785.

One famous schoolmaster, James Kirkwood, author of the "Grammatica Facilis," that book of Latin rudiments which tormented seventeenth-century lads, had been born in the neighbourhood of Dunbar, but there is no evidence that the burgh schools of Miller's time were of any special excellence. The truth is that like many local authorities of the day, the magnates of Dunbar had their troubles with unsatisfactory teachers, although Miller always spoke of his school-days in the highest terms. All his life he had a passion for books, and he traces his love for them to these early years. "Like the length of time that Jacob served for his beloved Rachel,"

he says, "these years appeared to me as one year, and it was no wonder therefore that I was in no hurry to bring about their termination." As late as 1815, when he himself was forty-four years of age and when it might have been supposed that his sense of gratitude for schoolday favours would have become somewhat dim, he was the prime mover in a scheme for having his old teachers publicly entertained to dinner by their former pupils. The event was intended to become an annual celebration, but it never got beyond this initial stage.

In after years, Miller came to have business relations with schoolmasters, and never lost this youthful enthusiasm for them. On every possible occasion he did what he could to further their interests individually and as a class. He showed considerable activity in regard to a measure that was intended to benefit their families, and takes much credit to himself for the fact that he afforded house-room for the meetings of the men who perfected the scheme. His share in the work had been kept secret, and he expected that the revelation which he now made of it would cause as much astonishment as "the declaration of the author of

'Waverley' did the band of comedians and others assembled round him on a certain memorable occasion"! "It was," he says, "in the little room off the back shop, the same now occupied by my son, over the way and nearly opposite to my present residence, on a Saturday afternoon, that the small coterie of country schoolmasters met and deposited in 1797 that small grain of mustard-seed which is as now well known to most of them, has become, in the year in which I write, a great tree under the designation of the 'Fund for the Relief of the Widows and Children of Burgh and Parochial Schoolmasters in Scotland'—now affording a comfortable lodgment for many of such, among the branches." Perhaps he takes too much credit to himself, and perhaps his part was chiefly to supply the printed literature required by the scheme. But there can be no doubt of his desire to do well by that "highly useful and respectable body of men, the schoolmasters, not only in his own neighbourhood but over many of the parishes of Scotland, many of whom have been of great service to him in the various publications in which he has been engaged."

Battle of the Books

One of the school games in which young Miller engaged has a peculiar interest in view of his subsequent career. He calls it "The Battle of the Books," though it follows Swift's satire in name only. "It was accomplished," he says, "as follows, Some little fellows of sufficient hardihood to stand, and firmness of nerve to deal many a blow, were picked out from the general run of the scholars and pitted against each other, armed with a book or a volume of a book as massy as he could wield with effect against his opponent armed like himself, and each mounted on the back of a companion of larger growth who became dignified on that occasion with the appellation of the horse—hence the name of the game, playing at horsemen; and a most dangerous sport or pastime it assuredly was, as the soreness of many a head and the havoc of many a book bore witness." In these contests Miller had his part, and as "a sturdy unflinching schoolboy that could not easily be made to cry out for quarter," endured many a buffet without complaint.

These schoolboy battles were no doubt in part suggested by the situation in which the town so frequently found itself. The almost

continuous warlike operations in which the country was engaged had peculiar interest for Dunbar and its neighbourhood. Its position at the mouth of the Firth of Forth was of strategic importance, and its streets and shores were seldom without the presence of regiments of cavalry and infantry and of fields of artillery. It even experienced the alarms of actual warfare. In September 1779 the squadron of the redoubtable Paul Jones lay off the town for some days and caused consternation among its inhabitants. Miller distinctly remembered "the reported turn-out of old wives with all the red cloaks they could muster in order to make an imposing appearance on the heights." Two years later a French privateer, under the command of the notorious Captain Fall, actually attempted a feeble bombardment of the town, one of the shots nearly ending the life of Miller's brother John. Stirring events like these could not but have their influence on the youth of the town, and following the example of many of his schoolfellows, young Miller was for a time captivated by the glamour of the red coat.

Schooldays being over it was necessary that a profession should be chosen for the growing

lad. His father gave him the choice of further attendance at his studies in case he should desire to become a schoolmaster. But George had no inclination in that direction and the other alternative was accordingly pressed upon him. This was to become a bookseller and stationer, and his father was induced to make the suggestion because of his son's fondness for "maps and prints." George gave a ready consent and almost immediately repented of it. His secret desire was for a seafaring life, and it required a course of severe self-discipline before he finally acquiesced in his father's proposal.

It would have been almost unnatural if young Miller had not thought of the sea, living as he did so near it. "I had not only been drawn to the sea," he says, "by reading the adventures of Robinson Crusoe, and associating so much with sailor boys in a seaport town in my early years, but from perusing as I grew up the 'Voyages' of the illustrious navigator, Captain Cook." Even after he had settled down to the more humdrum occupation of a country bookseller, he was occasionally visited by longings after his "prevailing hobby." In

the end, however, a narrow escape he had from drowning and the numerous shipwrecks that happened along the neighbouring coasts robbed the sea of much of its charm for him. Besides he speedily found that his "taste for voyages, travels and discoveries might be gratified and indulged at the fireside." But although Miller thus gave up all thoughts of the sea as a profession, he never altogether lost his interest in what belonged to it. He made various attempts to improve the methods of saving the crews of shipwrecked vessels, even anticipating the rocket apparatus, and one of the earliest books that issued from his press was an edition of "Robinson Crusoe."

The only bookseller at the time in Dunbar was one Alexander Smart. He had come from Edinburgh, and had settled down to the business of bookselling and bookbinding about the year 1780. He was probably the first merchant in Dunbar who had attempted to make a living by books alone. Before his arrival the intellectual necessities of the town had been provided for by the ordinary shopkeepers, or as Miller puts it, "the wants of the lieges had been supplied in the same manner as some of our neighbouring villages are

at present [1833], by the merchants or dealers in other articles." George was accordingly bound apprentice to Smart, his indenture being dated September 20, 1785. The period of service was for four years.

It was not an ideal arrangement. Smart was a man neither of capacity nor of capital. His business was of little or no importance, and he made no real effort to improve it. The description his apprentice gives of his premises shows how small a chance the lad had of learning his profession. They seem to have consisted of one small apartment. "In the back part," he says, "stood a small glass case with its assortment of Bibles and stationery articles, to which adjoined a few shelves with their scattered contents, scarcely sufficient to fill a bookstall of decent dimensions—a poor stock indeed for even a country bookseller." One side was taken up "with a few shelves containing implements for bookbinding," while the space between the door and the window "consisted of a piece of deal wall, covered over, to conceal its blemishes and fill up the vacancy, with a large two-sheet print of some of Cæsar's battles, or other operations, in which the hero of the piece was represented

by a pretty large figure and in a very conspicuous attitude." No wonder that Miller described the place as "grotesque looking."

"Behold me now transformed," he says, "from the hopeful schoolboy into the little apprentice, sitting behind my board in my master's shop, with my folder in my hand performing its evolutions, while the sheets rise in contracted forms and in tumbling piles before me." It may seem strange that James Miller should have been contented with such an arrangement for his son, but the father's views were long views. He foresaw that Smart was not likely to hold out long, and when he broke down a suitable opening would then be provided for the lad to set up in Dunbar for himself—a forecast which proved to be correct in every particular.

The insight young Miller received into the mysteries of bookcraft was accordingly of the most meagre description. With the exception of a little bookbinding, he seldom came into contact with books. During the first year of his apprenticeship master and man had the arrangement of the Earl of Haddington's library at Tyninghame, a bit of work which took three weeks, and for which Smart received the sum of

£5, with board for both. Some bookbinding had to be done, and the engagement brought £25 altogether, which Miller describes as a large sum to his "poverty-struck" master. A few months later they twice overhauled the books of Lord Westhall, a recently deceased senator of the College of Justice. But with these exceptions, added to auction sales carried out irregularly at various centres and spasmodic attendances at neighbouring country fairs, where a bookstall was set up, Miller had few chances of being made an expert in his profession.

There could of necessity be only one end to such a condition of things, and towards the close of 1787 Smart intimated that he intended giving up the struggle and returning to Edinburgh to attempt business there. In the following January he left for the city. The terms of his indenture did not provide for Miller's apprenticeship being carried on elsewhere than in Dunbar, but his father considered that George might possibly benefit by residence in the capital, and consented to his following his master—which he did at the end of the same month.

His experiences in Edinburgh were no better. First in dismal premises in a court off the Lawn-

market and afterwards in Frederick Street, which at that time was the western boundary of the New Town of Edinburgh, Smart was supposed to be attending to the training of his apprentice, but so little business was being done that the latter was free to take prolonged excursions into the country and otherwise amuse himself as best he could. In August he was loaned to a Dalkeith bookbinder for some weeks. At length Smart recognized the impossibility of carrying on business further or of fulfilling his engagement to Miller, and in September 1788 the indenture was broken by mutual consent. With as many tools and appropriate materials for bookbinding as he could gather together, including those that had belonged to Smart, Miller returned to Dunbar.

In arranging for his son's return home, the father's intention was that George and his brother James, three years his senior, should take over the Dunbar business and work it in partnership, now that he himself was approaching the age when he must retire. The brothers fell in with the plan, and hung out their sign with the name of the firm, "J. & G. Miller," upon it. The arrangement was destined, however, to last for a few weeks only. James took umbrage at some

delay George had made in a journey, and words ensued between the brothers. George in anger pulled down the sign, and made up his mind to carry out his long-cherished desire and go to sea. It required some time for his father to make him abandon his purpose, but he finally agreed to proceed to London by way of Newcastle, so that he might perfect himself in his profession by seeing some of the English workshops.

He set out on his journey on April 6, 1789, and at once proceeded to South Shields, where Smart, his old master, had settled down as a journeyman printer in the establishment of a local bookseller. During the few days he remained there he had his first, and apparently his only, lesson in the setting of type. "I was not long," he says, "in picking up as much at the printing business, at case and press, as enabled me to throw off 500 shop bills on, I think, pot folio, which appears to have given great satisfaction to my father." Miller lays much stress on this short experience of the printing-press, for he looked upon it as the foundation of the business he afterwards built up at Dunbar and Haddington. Some agreement was also made that he should work with a Newcastle bookseller named Miller.

He seems to have had a very poor opinion both of the character and of the business of this new master, although he acknowledges that he obtained from him some insight into several branches of bookbinding that were unknown to him, "such as the walnut-tree marbling of books, a thing since so common but then very imperfectly understood in Scotland, and even in Newcastle charged for something additional to the usual charges for binding. With him also I learned the art of binding with Russia bands, a thing not yet very generally understood, and which I have had occasion to practise more than once in course of my profession." His sojourn in England, however, was abruptly brought to a conclusion by a summons home to attend the death-bed of his father, and he left Newcastle on the 14th of May, after about six weeks' residence in the south.

His father lingered on till June 27, 1789, when he died in the sixty-fourth year of his age. Before the end he had effected a reconciliation between the brothers, and had obtained their consent to another plan of co-partnery for carrying on the business. The agreement was dated May 26th, and the engagement was to last for

a year at least. James was to have particular charge of the "grocery" side of the establishment, and George was to set up and work the bookselling department, with all its usual auxiliaries. The name of the firm was again to be "J. & G. Miller," and as it turned out continued so for nearly two and a half years.

CHAPTER III

PARTNERSHIP WITH BROTHER—MARRIAGE

ALTHOUGH the day of his formal apprenticeship had not yet expired, George Miller now found himself at the early age of eighteen fully embarked on the business of life. The brothers began with much enterprise. In addition to stocking the shop with stationery and a certain number of books, they determined to start a circulating library, an institution hitherto unknown in the district, and in fact somewhat novel to the whole country. Allan Ramsay had founded his library in Edinburgh half a century before, but circulating libraries were still confined to the large centres of population. On November 20, 1789, the Millers opened their new department with a printed catalogue containing the names of 507 volumes, a number which was increased to 1,019 before a year had passed, as is shown by a second catalogue issued on October

12, 1790. The business so increased on the bookbinding side that in a short time George found it necessary to indenture two apprentices.

In later days George looked back with a certain pride to this notable departure in Dunbar shopkeeping. It was he, he said, "that first established that great and wonderfully illuminating process, the Book Trade, in Dunbar upon anything like a permanent foundation, and that at a time when such a thing was so much wanted in this quarter of the county, laying in his native town at that early period the foundation of that useful reservoir for accumulating, and copious source for diffusing, the means of knowledge and useful information, throughout the adjoining parishes."

There was, indeed, a certain boldness in beginning a bookseller's business in Dunbar at the time. The Millers had the failure of their predecessor before them as a warning. Even although the town was on the highway between Edinburgh and England, it could not be expected to provide an extensive custom. The condition of Scottish bookselling at the time, due to a lack of initiative and enterprise among those who carried it on, might also have deterred them. John Gibson Lockhart draws a dreary picture of the sordid

contentment in which the booksellers of the capital lived at the close of the eighteenth century. He describes them as "petty retailers inhabiting snug shops and making a little money in the most tedious and uniform way imaginable." They took no risks, and certainly none in publishing books unless it was an odd volume of sermons that never achieved a reasonable circulation. They were contented to be "a very humble appendage of understrappers to the trade of the Row" in London.

The Millers must have been well aware of this lethargy in high places, and it consequently required no little courage on their part to undertake the sale of books even on the small scale possible for country merchants. Only one thing mitigated the apparent rashness of their enterprise; they determined not to trust to books alone for their success, but took hostages of fortune by making sure that they had the more stable business of ordinary grocers to fall back upon in case of failure.

The stock with which the Millers started could not have been either extensive or varied; they had to cater for a public whose appetite had almost to be created. James Lackington, the

well-known bookseller of Moorfields, paid a visit to Scotland in the autumn of 1787, and his judgment on the bookshops he saw is worth quoting in full. "I set out for Edinburgh," he says, "and in all the principal towns through which I passed, was led from a motive of curiosity, as well as with a view towards some valuable purchases, to examine the booksellers' shops for scarce and curious books; but although I went by way of York, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, etc., and returned through Glasgow, Carlisle, Leeds, Lancaster, Preston, Manchester, and other considerable places, I was much surprised, as well as disappointed, at meeting with very few of the works of the most esteemed authors; and those few consisted in general of ordinary editions, besides an assemblage of common, trifling books bound in sheep, and that, too, in a very bad manner. It is true, at York and Leeds there were a few (and but very few) good books; but in all the other towns between London and Edinburgh nothing but trash was to be found: in the latter city, indeed, a few capital articles are kept, but in no other part of Scotland."

Three years later Lackington went over the same ground, but he found no reason to alter his

judgment. "I was much mortified," he writes, "to be under the necessity of confirming my former observations." The route of the English bookseller towards Edinburgh lay through Dunbar, and the coach on which he journeyed would stop to change horses near the Millers' shop, if not actually before it. Lackington would accordingly have an opportunity of investigating his fellow-salesmen's establishment. There is no evidence that he found anything to cause him to modify the general condemnation he passed on provincial booksellers.

Miller gives one example of a sale, however, that proved the firm's enterprise and showed the reading possibilities of the district. Early in 1780 they received from Hugh Ingles, a printer whose place of business was in the West Port of Edinburgh, subscription papers for a new edition of Knox's "History of the Reformation." In scarcely more than a month the Millers had obtained orders for sixty copies, and on the 28th of October the number had reached eighty. The original printed list of subscribers is still extant, and shows that with the exception of thirteen copies, which were given to a local carrier for distribution, and the destinations of which are

not therefore known, the remainder were disposed of to readers within the near neighbourhood of the town.

In the course of the summer of 1791, while still in company with his brother, Miller passed through the first of two romantic episodes that befell him. When his stepmother died in 1780 his father had obtained from the neighbourhood of North Berwick a near relation of his own, Janet Jamieson by name, to act as his housekeeper. During the closing years of his life she had approved herself and had been specially helpful and attentive to him on his death-bed. After his decease she had remained in charge of the household. Although unable to point to any definite words on the subject, Miller affirms that his father, before his death, had indicated that a marriage between him and Janet would meet with his approval. If his father had any wish in the matter, what he desired came to pass. The young people were thrown much together and a marriage was arranged between them. Apparently without any necessity for such a course the pair made a runaway match of it. Unknown to everybody but the mother of the bride, who, strange to say, sanctioned the proceedings, they

went to Edinburgh, and there on the 3rd of June were married without proclamation of banns, by one of the city ministers.[1]

The marriage thus romantically and irregularly celebrated had several important consequences for the happy pair. They had offended against the established civil and religious law and order. Miller was accordingly summoned before the parish session clerk and mulcted in 3s. 6d. for having dared to omit due proclamation of his intention. As his family belonged to a religious denomination that specially frowned upon such ways of entering the matrimonial state, the bridegroom had also to appear at the bar of his own kirk-session and be rebuked for his conduct. He evidently endeavoured to make a spirited defence, for one of the elders had to remark, "What! have you come here to bamboozle us a'": according to their discipline no defence was possible. Miller's wife was in the same position as himself, but he chivalrously demanded that no censure should be passed on her. The fault, if there was a fault, he declared, was his alone. The session

[1] The officiating clergyman was the Rev. Thomas Randall, minister of the Tron parish, and ancestor of the present Archbishop of Canterbury.

apparently took the same view for his wife's name is not mentioned in their records.

Whether his treatment on this occasion had anything to do with his leaving the Secession Church it is impossible to say, but in January 1795 he addressed a letter to his minister saying that, as he could no longer be bound by the statements of any creed, he desired to sever his connection with the congregation. It was a particular grievance with him that he received no answer to this communication, and it is certainly strange that the records of the congregation bear no evidence that it was ever dealt with. For a time he worshipped with a small body of Wesleyan Methodists, who had a chapel in the town, but on the settlement of the Rev. Dr. Patrick Carfrae in the parish church in the autumn of the same year he joined the Church of Scotland, where he evidently obtained the freedom he wanted. He died in its membership.

These ecclesiastical censures, however, were not the only effects of George's marriage. James conceived himself injured by his brother's action. He complained that he had not been told of the projected alliance, and indicated that the bond of co-partnery did not contemplate the possibility

of an early marriage on his brother's part. George had no difficulty in answering the complaint. The original agreement, he said, had been for one year only, and double that time had passed. There was still ample opportunity, he suggested, for James to make preparations for his own future. Notice was accordingly given that he desired freedom from his contract with him as soon as possible.[1]

Some delay took place before an arrangement was come to, but it was ultimately agreed that the business should be divided between the brothers, James taking the grocery, and George the book department. The value of the latter was nearly double that of the former, and when this was pointed out George suggested that he should sell off the excess stock on his side and make equal division of the proceeds. To facilitate the realization, George with his wife and a clerk carried on

[1] George had various causes for dissatisfaction with his brother. One slight he felt keenly. Without informing him of his intention, James had himself made a burgess of the town on November 17, 1789. This George regarded as stealing a march upon him. "I would no doubt," he says, "feel a wish, like any young man entering into life, to be introduced into society, and it was not every day that such an opportunity occurred for getting me introduced to the constituted authorities."

book sales in the neighbouring villages, thus making a start with that country auctioneering which he maintained almost up to the end of his life. The results were not very encouraging. "It was a week of much toil and labour," he writes, "and notwithstanding the kindness of friends, I may add, expense to little purpose, as our whole drawings did not much exceed £13. The little that was done . . . must have served two good purposes at the time, as putting me in possession of a little ready cash, which I no doubt stood in need of for various purposes, and confirming me in the determination more than ever not to trust entirely to the book line in making provision for my family."

Before the 20th of October, 1791, the final adjustments were made and George was ready to start business on his own account. James continued in the special line of shopkeeping he had chosen. He does not appear to have gone deeply into bookselling, although he conducted a juvenile circulating library for a time. Separated in business, the brothers became separated also in fortune. James made a fair competency before he died: George ended his days in comparative poverty. "He has been crowned with civic and ecclesiastical

honours," says the latter, "while I have been suffered to dwell in obscurity. His steps have been followed by wealth and abundance, while I have never been able to rise above the chilling damps of poverty. He is now in possession of houses and lands of his own and what may be called a comfortable independence, while I have not the smallest tenement I can call my own—not an inch of garden ground to recreate myself in. . . ." But though this was so, George had the grace to add: "Still I do not envy my brother's good fortune. I too have had, and still have, my joys which nothing earthly can deprive me of." It is satisfactory to know that the brothers did not part in anger, and that although they were rivals in business in the same small town, cordial relations existed between them to the end. Only once had George to complain. On the ground that he had vowed never to stand surety for any man, James refused to lend his name to the bank on his brother's behalf when the latter's affairs became involved in 1816. George felt the refusal keenly, but, to the credit of both, it created no breach between them.

CHAPTER IV

STARTS BUSINESS ON HIS OWN ACCOUNT—AUTHORSHIP

IN 1792 the town of Dunbar consisted mainly of a single street with the narrow closes that ran down from it to the harbour. It was a respectable thoroughfare and could be compared favourably with the chief streets of the ordinary Lothian and Fifeshire coast towns of the day. Half-way along it stood the quaint town-hall, and practically the whole business of the burgh was done in the shops that lay under the shadow of its old-world steeple. The merchants who owned them were not for the most part oppressed by their labours, and there was little probability that they would be called on to exert themselves more strenuously in the near future. Once upon a time the harbour had been noted for the deep-sea fishing carried on from it, but now it counted on its list only twelve boats, which gave fitful

employment to a handful of forty men. Two whalers made Dunbar their home port, and the East Lothian and Merse Fishing Company had their headquarters within it, but their fleet had been reduced from five vessels to two. Eighteen ships engaged in a coasting and a foreign trade, but they could boast of only 1,500 tons' burden among them. The merchants, therefore, could depend only to a limited extent on the sea-borne traffic of the port for their business.

Situated in a rich agricultural region and easy of access from the wealthier parts of the county, Dunbar looked most to its corn markets for its livelihood. Once every week the farmers gathered into the town to dispose of their produce, and then the street hummed with the business of buying and selling. Grain that changed hands had thereafter to be shipped or sent by road to the large towns, and most of the burgh's prosperity depended on the efficiency with which this was done. Real increase in the trade of the district was confidently expected from certain cotton, flax, and flour mills which some enterprising manufacturers had recently erected at West Barns, a village distant about two miles. Already these works had attracted "a number of hands, and especially

FIRST SHOP OF GEORGE MILLER, DUNBAR: AFTERWARDS OF WILLIAM MILLER.

(From a photo by Mr. T. T. Bisset, Dunbar.

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young people," but any hopes thus raised were in the long run doomed to disappointment, for the mills were forced to close down. The village, however, was so near Dunbar that its traders were certain to reap some advantage from the temporary increase of population there.

In adding his name to the list of Dunbar merchants, Miller had a double problem to solve, he had to provide both a home and a shop. After his marriage he and his wife had continued to live *en famille* with his brother in the old house, but it was impossible that that arrangement could last indefinitely. Within a week or two of his marriage he had entered into negotiations with a local proprietor for business premises, and was successful in obtaining what he wanted. The place chosen had recently passed from the tenancy of a tailor, who through carelessness and inattention to business had been compelled to retire. It was well fitted up, for the tailor had been possessed of considerable means. The shop lies on the west side of the High Street, was afterwards occupied by Miller's son William, and is still used as a stationer's. "The shop had then," he says, "a humble appearance with its narrow door and one small window," as compared with what it has

" now with its modern front, a double glazed door, and two large windows." The back premises provided what accommodation his family required, his household including his half-brother John, who had been specially committed to his charge by his father.

The shop was opened for business on the 20th of October after a struggle to secure the necessary stock and equipment. The capital at the young merchant's disposal was small indeed, and he gives pathetic details of the way he laid out what he possessed on furnishings. He had determined to trade both in groceries and in books, for, as he explained, in a small town like Dunbar two trades were absolutely necessary when each had only a small stock. He had probably his own shop in view when he wrote : " It was not uncommon for country shopkeepers to deal in such a number of different articles and of such incongruous qualities and uses, that the apartments where their sales were made and their multifarious assortments of goods exhibited, had more the appearance of what might have been supposed that of an American store of the olden time than a shop of modern date." He seldom refers to the grocery side of his trade, but he records how once it nearly

involved him in a serious conflict. "It was customary in those days," he says, "for the shopkeepers in the town (at least the grocery part of them) to have monthly meetings for the purpose of regulating their sales for the ensuing month by the state of the markets, etc." After one of these meetings it was suspected that some of the merchants had not been faithful to the agreements made. Miller took a foremost part in bringing the delinquents to book, and what he said gave grievous offence to an innocent member of the combination. A challenge was gravely issued and a meeting was duly arranged. The difference, however, was made up on the very field of proposed battle, and with no little satisfaction to himself Miller emerged safe from the controversy.

In the book department Miller determined to continue the circulating library, not for its own sake, for he found it an "unprofitable and troublesome business," but because it was "of essential use in bringing customers to the shop and enabling me to seek out and establish a business for myself —a disadvantage which my brother, who had fallen so smoothly into the old-established business of my father, never knew what it was to labour under." To make his intentions in the book department

known he distributed the following small handbill, the first print of many he was to issue :—

GEORGE MILLER

BOOKSELLER, BINDER AND STATIONER

Desirous to inform the inhabitants of this place and its invirons, that he has removed from his former shop, to that lately occupied by Mr. James Hunter, opposite Mr. Lorimer's ; where he continues to carry on the above businesses, etc., as formerly : and as he is resolved to deal both in the Wholesale and Retail way, upon the very lowest terms, he hopes for a continuation of their much esteemed favours.

The announcement was a somewhat audacious one, for he had not the necessary stock to carry on a wholesale trade. But the phrase covered an intention that was distinctly original. He knew that the surrounding schools required books, and he proposed to enter into an understanding with the schoolmasters to supply what was needed through them. In this he appears to have been successful, for to the last he speaks of the country teachers as being most helpful to him in his business and as continuing his best friends to the end.

Book Sales

At first Miller's progress was necessarily slow, and the amount of his drawings was frequently most disappointing. It is evident from his autobiography that his heart was set almost exclusively on the book department, and that he regarded the grocery business as merely the auxiliary that made his chief work possible. His ambition from the beginning was to establish a good retail trade, and he bent his energies to achieve that end. At the outset his stock would necessarily include much that, from a literary point of view, was of slight importance. One of the earliest descriptions he gives of the contents of the shop is that "small histories, sermons, catechisms, ballads, children's books and pictures" could be obtained from it. The Bible was largely used as a text-book in the schools, and for years he disposed of many copies to the children through the schoolmasters. It was also a long-established custom for young couples setting up housekeeping to make a large family Bible part of their necessary furnishings. Almost the earliest orders Miller received were for several of these books, payment being either on delivery or by instalments. In 1790 John Taylor, a Berwick-upon-Tweed printer, published a quarto edition of Osterwald's Bible in parts and with plates. In two

years Miller sold no fewer than 250 copies. In noting these sales Miller has the candour to add : "I do not mention these numbers as any way surprising in these days when the number trade is so extensively cultivated, and the canvassing business so much followed after ; but let any one look back to my situation and the times I then lived in, and then form his ideas of the importance of the transactions here recorded."

The lustre of these achievements, however, was somewhat dimmed by the great success which he afterwards had with Forsyth's "Beauties of Scotland." Of this large work he sold no fewer than forty-two large paper copies and seventy-six small, "not a bad number for a country sale," he comments, "when it is remembered that the large paper copy retailed at five guineas and the small at three pounds fifteen shillings." Miller says that even the publisher of the book, the well-known Constable of Edinburgh, expressed astonishment at such a result.

Though he did not consider his circulating library a very profitable part of his business, Miller nevertheless continued to develop it. In October 1792 he published his first catalogue, with a suitable "Word to the Public" as an

introduction. It contained the titles of 1,001 volumes, a large number when it is remembered that many of the former books had been sold when the brothers split partnership. It was characteristic of the lender to make sure that the public should not be injured in any way by what he provided for them, and there consequently stands the intimation that "everything of an indelicate or immoral tendency" was excluded from his shelves.

At first the library was known as "G. Miller's Circulating Library, Dunbar," but as the years passed it changed its name with its growth. In 1809 Miller published a catalogue running to 160 pages, and containing the names of upwards of 3,500 books. The library was then known as the "Dunbar and Country Circulating Library," and was indeed a creditable collection for a small country town. By 1811 he had added what he comprehensively describes as an "Agricultural, Commercial, Military Intelligence, News and Reading Room," situated above his shop, which he had now dignified with the title of "The India Tea Warehouse." Miller says of this latest development that it was "perhaps one of the most complete establishments to be met with

in any town of equal size in this part of the United Kingdom."

This state of things represented the library at its best, and its success was partly due to the patronage of the soldiers encamped in the neighbourhood. When the Napoleonic scare passed away, and the military were withdrawn, the situation became "too local and circumscribed" for the library to flourish. It was accordingly broken up and the books taken to Haddington. After the removal some of the townsfolk attempted to maintain a subscription library, but it also soon succumbed to an adverse fate.

Both as an apprentice, and while in partnership with his brother, Miller had had experience of selling books by auction in the country around Dunbar. As soon as he was fairly established in business for himself, he developed this method of disposing of his stock. His first sale took place in 1791, and he kept to the plan down almost to the close of his career. At first he conducted operations under a licence taken out in his own name, but he afterwards employed regular auctioneers, of whom his son William was one of the chief. The sales always took place under cover and in the evening, the

village school being usually hired for the purpose.

This particular method of selling books did not always commend itself to the trade in general. It is recorded that when William Nelson, the well-known Edinburgh publisher, sought to extend his business by sending out a traveller to canvass the booksellers, he met with considerable coldness from them because of "his mode of doing business through auction sales" of the very kind carried on by Miller. No objection ever seems to have come from printers and publishers themselves, for Miller remained on cordial relations with these till the last. That he persevered in the method proved that it was not only profitable to himself but was also desirable for the sake of the people themselves. "So long as I continued in the book trade," he wrote, "the inhabitants of our neighbourhood, and more remote villages scattered over the country, must have all been supplied with a plentiful treat of mental food, and that of the most useful and wholesome as well as variegated description to suit all tastes and fancies at a cheap and easy rate." He certainly spared no effort in the attempt to reach all classes. His "literary perambulations," as he

called them, in connection with his auction sales and his autumn canvass for orders, took him all over Scotland, "from Tweedside to the Banks of Ayr, and from Kirkmaiden and the shores of the Fleet to the country in the neighbourhood of John o' Groats in Caithness."

During these opening years of his business life in Dunbar, Miller was steadily pursuing a course of self-culture. He early developed an interest in natural science and in philosophical speculation. He made experiments in electricity and acquired more than a superficial knowledge of astronomy. His philosophy ran along the line of a believing theology, and he wrote elaborate dissertations on speculative matters, which he docketed and piled up in his desk. He found ample material for these essays in the various discussions to which the French Revolution had given rise, and especially in the social and religious questions that were agitating the public mind. Tom Paine had but recently published his "Age of Reason," which along with his other writings Miller sold in his shop until interdict put a stop to their issue. He had given his attention to the arguments used in these and other publications, and soon made up his mind concerning their validity.

Except in the determination to free himself from all creed subscription, his opinions were entirely orthodox.

From early life Miller had cultivated this itch for writing, and even as a boy kept diaries and noted down passing events. Apparently at his suggestion, a literary society named the "Parthenon" was started in the town, and Miller read several papers before it on subjects dear to the heart of such juvenile clubs. In 1791 he had even appeared in print with an article contributed to Dr. Anderson's Edinburgh *Bee* on the payment of small debts—a subject that was attracting some attention on the ground that even indebtedness for a trifling sum might result in a long period of imprisonment.

He was, therefore, now prepared for higher work, and he entered on the absorbing debate of the time with joy. At the end of 1794 he published a pamphlet with a title that, like all his other titles, was distinguished for its length. It runs: "An Antidote to Deism, selected from the works of a Friend to Religious Liberty, and recommended as a Supplement to Paine's 'Age of Reason.' To which is prefixed An Address to the Rational Part of Mankind: and to which

are added Four Queries addressed to confirmed Deists. By a Lover of Truth." The argument of the pamphlet is perhaps sufficiently indicated by its author's summary of it : "Divine revelation is acknowledged to be necessary on account of the dimness of corrupt nature and reason, the present state and imperfection of man and the benevolent attributes of the Deity." Five hundred copies were printed, and seem to have sold well at the price of threepence each.

Eighteen months later he made another venture into public controversy. However anxious he had been as a lad to wear a red coat, he abandoned the idea when he came to years of discretion. Europe was like a cockpit, and men could hardly help being impressed by the horrors of war, however much they might approve of the conflict then being waged by their country. Natives of Dunbar especially were being constantly reminded of the possibilities of invasion, and military movements were taking place in their neighbourhood with more or less frequency. Miller expressed his mind on the whole subject in a pamphlet of sixty-four octavo pages, entitled : " War a System of Madness and Irreligion : to which is subjoined by way of conclusion, The Dawn of Universal

Peace. Wrote on the late Fast Day, March 10, 1796. By Humanitas,"—the Fast Day being the day of humiliation ordered by the Government to be observed over the country. The remedy Miller had to propose was arbitration. Although unable to point to any effect his tract may have had, he says, "That it was approved of by some, and had its due effects on others I have reason to be sure; but that the still small voice of an obscure individual like me should be much attended to even through that powerful organ the press, in an age and at a time when every consideration with the generality of my countrymen was absorbed in the almost universal military mania, was more than I had any reason to expect."

For a time the number of his customers was not so large as to interfere with these literary exercises, and he continued to ride his scribbling hobby to the utmost. Like many another amateur author he placed no mean value upon what he wrote, and his manuscripts once prepared were never destroyed. When occasion demanded, he did not hesitate to use them more than once, and some of his articles appeared in type in two or three forms. Several papers which were afterwards printed in his two magazines

were composed at this time. Continual practice in writing, however, did him good, and he acquired a certain facility in composition, although what he wrote was for the most part marred by diffuseness and irrelevancy.

Miller also set himself to build up a private library. A list of the books he possessed in 1794 is extant. They are of all sizes, from the stately folio downwards, and show that he had a distinct preference for theological treatises. Throughout the greater part of his chequered career he retained these volumes, and one of the most painful experiences in a life that had a full share of ills was their compulsory dispersal near the close.

In addition to his literary pursuits Miller showed active interest in several social problems. Wilberforce was at the time pressing for negro emancipation, and the agitation was being carried on all over the country. A local "Society for Abolishing the Slave Trade" had been formed in Dunbar, and in the spring of 1792 Miller was engaged in gathering subscriptions for it. The scheme in which he took most interest, however, was that for providing some means for saving life at sea. A wreck near the town

had convinced him that much could be done to prevent the loss of any crew that was cast ashore. He succeeded in arousing the sympathy of a few persons like-minded with himself. They met in January 1793 and drew up an elaborate constitution for a "Humane Society." The project involved securing a mortar for throwing a rope over a vessel that had drifted ashore, a lifeboat provided with a carriage to take it to different parts of the coast, and various other apparatus. But the benevolent plan fell through. A mortar could not be procured, and sufficient subscriptions were not forthcoming for the rest of the scheme. Twenty years afterwards Miller pointed out that part of the difficulty he had met with was to convince the public that the most useful way a rope could be attached to a wreck was by throwing it from the shore to the vessel, and not from the vessel to the shore, an opinion contrary to that generally held. In the long run he was justified by seeing perfected Captain Manby's rocket apparatus, which employed the method he advocated. Although his scheme was not carried out at the time Miller deserves all the credit due to a pioneer.

CHAPTER V

THE EAST LOTHIAN PRESS—CHEAP TRACTS

IN 1795 Miller took a great step forward in business. In 1790, while still in partnership with his brother, he had been offered the plant of John Taylor, the Berwick-upon-Tweed printer. The price was to be between £200 and £300, but the resources of the firm would not allow of the purchase. Correspondence with Taylor was renewed in the year named, with the result that Miller then acquired from him "a printing-press and sundries" for £23. With the help of an apprentice, who went to Berwick to be shown how to take down and put up the press, and assisted by John his brother, now a lad of fourteen, Miller brought his purchase safe to Dunbar. Soon after the press was set up the establishment became known as the "East Lothian Press," a name which continued when it was extended to

Haddington, and even after the Millers had ceased connection with it.

George Miller rightly takes great credit to himself for the fact that his was the first press to be erected in East Lothian. The claim, however, is not beyond all challenge. It is said that the name of a printer, resident in Haddington earlier in the century, occurs in a legal document. But this printer is an exceedingly nebulous personage, and certainly nothing he may ever have printed is known. If he existed at all, he probably was a man who, being a printer elsewhere, had some local connection. Miller may therefore, without much possibility of the distinction being taken from him, be counted the first printer who worked a press in Haddingtonshire.

At the time he took this step printing establishments were not numerous in the provincial towns of Scotland. As compared with some other countries Scotland had been somewhat late in adopting the press at the very beginning, and her chief towns exhibited a like dilatoriness even after Edinburgh had shown the way. The severe printing restrictions then in force might in part explain why Edinburgh,

St. Andrews, Aberdeen, Glasgow, and Leith alone had presses at work during the seventeenth century, and why some of them existed for a short time only. The fear of incurring penalties for unlicensed printing had disappeared during the eighteenth century, and it might have been supposed that the larger provincial towns would have taken advantage of the opportunity thus opened up. So far as can be ascertained, however, presses were at work in 1795 in the following places only: Dumfries, Dundee, Perth, Inverness, Kilmarnock, Hawick, Kelso, Duns, and Montrose, with the possible addition of Dunfermline. After enjoying the services of a printer for a year in the sixteenth century, Stirling had just again begun operations. As a centre for a press it could not be said that Dunbar was as favourably situated as the places named. They were sufficiently remote from the chief printing towns and from one another to justify expectation of success, while Dunbar was so near Edinburgh, the principal printing centre of the country, that it might have been considered hazardous to attempt even a modified rivalry. Miller, however, saw an opening possible and with considerable courage he went in and occupied

it. His enterprise was justified, and it was only after his press had been nine years in operation that he was compelled by circumstances to transfer it to Haddington as a more suitable centre.

There can be no doubt that Miller had a wide purpose in thus adding a printing-press to his other forms of activity. He thought he saw in the scattered community around him a field of enterprise which would augment his own profits, but he reckoned that while doing so he would be able to confer great benefits upon its members.

East Lothian was at the time, and still remains, an agricultural county. Fisheries were indeed carried on along the coasts, but they were neither large nor of great profit. In its western districts coal-mining employed a large number of men, but the industry had not as yet reached the development it afterwards attained. Miller had accordingly to look to the agricultural labourers as his main constituency, but for various causes they did not afford a very promising field for a merchant in books.

For one thing money was scarce. The wage of a skilled tradesman within the county averaged only from 10s. to 12s. a week. The

ordinary farm labourer was paid mostly in kind, and it was reckoned that his total income from all sources never exceeded £13 a year, a miserable pittance from which he had to feed and clothe wife and children. No doubt there were compensations. The price of food was much smaller than it is to-day. Should his wife be strong and healthy, she might earn enough during harvest to pay the rent of the wretched cottage they inhabited—a building usually only of one compartment. But even with such possibilities of augmenting his income, a living was not always sure. Already tendencies had set in that made for a decrease of employment. Farms were becoming larger and more land was being laid down in grass. The use of two-horse ploughs, as well as the introduction of various improvements, was reducing the number of hands required, and the labour market was becoming congested. As a consequence almost every parish within the county was returning a diminishing number of inhabitants. Altogether the conditions of life were such that the ordinary labourer had little to spend on luxuries like books.

Nor had he been trained to be a reader, and even if he had he had little means of access

to books. The county possessed one or two libraries, but for one reason or another they were beyond the reach of the people. The Presbyteries of Dunbar and Haddington had each a collection of books, which were then little used, and have since been entirely neglected. Nearly a century before a native of Haddington had bequeathed a library of notable volumes to his birthplace. To-day they are of no mean value to the bibliographer, but a century ago they were as likely, from their nature, to attract readers among the common people as they are to-day. The famous Bishop Burnet had given a library to his old parish of Salton, but had reserved it "for the minister's house and use." As far back as 1683 there was a collection of sixty books attached to the parochial school of Ormiston, but the benefit they were likely to bestow on the general community may be judged from the fact that they were "in Hebrew, Greek, and Latin, as well as in English." Nor had the usual parochial school done much to foster in the people a taste for literature. About the time Miller set up in business the minister of Pencaitland said of his parishioners: "All of them can at least read the Bible, and the greatest part of the

young men, whose parents could afford but little for their education, attend the schoolmaster in the winter evenings, who for a small consideration teaches them writing and the commoner rules of arithmetic." But such a training could not make them lovers of books. Greater facilities came to be put within the reach of farm-servants, but half a century later the minister of Haddington, the centre of the county's culture, could still write : "Though in general acquainted with the elementary branches of education—as reading, writing, and arithmetic—and amply provided with the means of information in most departments of knowledge, by having access to libraries, parochial and itinerating, they are not much given to reading, nor remarkable for their attainments in general information." It is surely testimony to Miller's insight that he was able to see possibilities of literary attainment in such apparently adverse material, and to his industry that he succeeded in building up a promising business among them.

At first Miller had to be his own compositor and pressman, for although he had bound his brother John as an apprentice to himself in October of the preceding year, the lad could not

as yet be of much assistance. The plant permitted of work of the jobbing kind only, but Miller had soon an increasing custom in that direction. When he had longer manuscripts to set up he had still to give them out, and his pamphlet on war was in this way printed in Edinburgh even after he had acquired a press of his own. By the spring of 1801, however, he had adequate assistance, and in that year purchased a second press. With it he was able to produce larger works, and before the year closed had printed and published "Robinson Crusoe," a duodecimo of 238 pages.

For some time after obtaining his first press Miller merely executed what work was sent in to him. In 1798 he struck out a bolder line by printing for sale by himself Shorter Catechisms, some children's books, and what he calls "24mo pamphlets," of which he produced "an assortment of twenty kinds." These were what are now known as chapbooks, though Miller carefully avoids the name for a reason that will appear later. They included such prints as Montgomerie's "Cherry and the Slae," and "The Laird of Cool's Ghost," which latter was afterwards somewhat severely denounced by him. In

1800 he added ballads. The extent of his production in this particular branch may be gauged from a note he has under date 1801. He speaks of "My halfpenny books, 25 reams, or 48,000, of which I appear to have printed from the 8th of February to the 18th of March this year, which were succeeded by 12,000 penny ones. And on the 1st of May I have it recorded that I finished my 240 reams of ballads, which were characterized by their purity from anything offensive to propriety and delicacy, and some of them, I believe, for their moral tendency, a thing not very common among their predecessors, and which I mention the more as being perhaps the first attempt of the kind to reform, if not to remodel, what has been supposed to have so much influence on the lower orders—the national ballads."

Most of these prints have now perished, but some specimens have survived to show their style: on the whole they were crudely printed on inferior paper. They were, however, the means of introducing Miller to wholesale trading. He exchanged them for similar productions of other presses, and so increased his stock. In this way, for example, he obtained from a Falkirk printer the ten volumes of an edition of Erskine's works

for sixteen reams of his 24mo booklets. Quantities of them were also disposed of to booksellers, who sold them to the hawkers, and these in turn scattered them over the countryside.

Twice in these early years of his press Miller came into conflict with the law. For some time he had been printing Shorter Catechisms and the Proverbs of Solomon for use in schools. These books the King's Printers alone had the right to print, and in the summer of 1800 Miller was somewhat rudely awakened to a sense of his transgression by being interdicted from further production. This was all the harder on him because he had just procured a new fount of type in order to print them in better style.[1]

The other was more serious. One day in July 1799 a Government official appeared in his office and seized certain bundles of paper on the ground that it had been wrongly "classed"—that is, that

[1] In 1785 a commission as King's Printers for Scotland was bestowed upon Sir James Hunter Blair and John Bruce as successors to Alexander Kincaid, the grant to become effective in July 1798 and to run for forty-one years. It bestowed upon them "the sole and only privilege of printing in Scotland Bibles, New Testaments, Psalm Books, Books of Common Prayer, Confessions of Faith, and the Larger and Shorter Catechisms in English."

the tax paid on the paper had been lower than its quality demanded, and that a fraud had therefore been committed on the revenue. Miller was so astonished at the action of the officer that he resisted the seizure, and the man had at length to send for a file of soldiers to aid him in effecting his purpose.

The double offence of fraud and deforcement was a serious one, and might have ended most disastrously for Miller had he not taken steps to put himself right with the authorities. Next morning he generously made all haste on a borrowed horse to the mill at Chirnside, from which he had obtained the paper, and so prevented the manufacturer from issuing more of it. That action, however, did not save himself, and in a short time he received a summons to appear before the Court of Exchequer to answer the charges made against him. As it turned out, the trial did not take place. The manufacturer was able to convince the authorities that while the paper was in course of manufacture the very officer who had made the seizure had advised him "to make the paper a small shade darker so that it might be put into the second class and so be charged a smaller duty than the first."

The defence was irresistible, and the charges were withdrawn.

The trade which Miller had now built up in cheap popular literature soon led him to take the whole matter of their contents into his serious consideration. As has already been indicated, he was uneasy about the evil effects these cheap prints had upon public morality, and in 1802 he proceeded to put into execution a plan which he deemed would preserve all the good such popular literature was fitted to do, and at the same time destroy the tendencies for evil that lurked in its wide distribution. Miller was fairly well equipped for the development he had in view. He was now able to produce work of which no printer need be ashamed. In 1803, for example, he sent out a single sheet giving the signals to be displayed in the event of the French attempting a landing on the coast, that could hardly be excelled in beauty of type and grace of setting.

For many generations chapbooks had been the prevailing literature of the common people in Scotland as they had been elsewhere. There may have been a sufficiency of books and magazines for the better classes over the country and for the indwellers in the cities, but the peasantry were

largely, if not wholly, dependent on what the itinerant hawker, who periodically visited their neighbourhood with all manner of articles to sell, might bring in his basket. Any literature the chapmen carried in this way had to be cheap, for money did not circulate extensively among their possible clients; it had to be simple because their customers had neither the training to understand severe treatises nor the desire to read them; and it had to have qualities which would make each publication attractive in itself and the forerunner of further purchases from the same basket. It is to be feared that the chapbooks thus provided were often characterized by coarseness and sometimes even by obscenity.

Perhaps Dr. William Chambers provides a sufficiently succinct description of this class of literature. "The old Chap Books," he says, "consisting of coarsely printed sheets, duodecimo, embellished with coarse frontispieces, aimed at no sort of instruction such as we now understand by the term; yet they furnished amusement to the humble fireside. They appealed to the popular love of the heroic, the marvellous, the pathetic and the humorous. Many of them were nothing more than an embodiment of the legends, super-

stitions, ballads, and songs which had been kept alive by oral tradition before the invention of printing. Superstitions, as may be supposed, formed the staple material. So numerous were the books for telling fortunes, discovering and averting witchcraft, narrating the appearance of ghosts, prognosticating the weather, interpreting dreams, and explaining lucky and unlucky days that the extent and depth of public credulity must have been immense." To all which must be added that a large proportion of chapbooks were religious and dealt with Bible narratives or episodes in Church history. So extensive was the circulation of all kinds that it has been estimated that the annual sale in Scotland must have greatly exceeded 200,000. The leading Scottish presses for their production were those of Glasgow, Edinburgh, Falkirk, Stirling, and Paisley.[1]

[1] It is said that the family of Croumbie, merchants in Stenton, a village a few miles from Dunbar, had for generations supplied the travelling dealers of their day with their miscellaneous wares. "It appears that East Lothian was the great centre of this extinct chapman trade, to which these Abercrombies and Croumbies belonged, before its removal to Kent. The guild was large, far-travelled, and rich. Their rendezvous was at the foot of the fine old Cross at Preston Tower. . . . There they met in general assembly, elected their king and his lords-depute (for such was the

Much of this ephemeral literature had, even at its best, so little educational or moral value that it is surprising no earlier effort was made to replace it. Such a hold, however, had it upon the affections of the people that it required no ordinary courage to attempt its displacement: it was to this task that Miller boldly applied himself.

His plan was to substitute for it publications which, while avowedly religious and moral, were nevertheless near enough to it in appearance and style not to suggest a violent rupture between the old and the new. It does not appear that Miller stepped in as a reformer from the outside. He gives no indication that he had any personal acquaintance with the evils wrought by the chap-book, but there is every probability that he had practical experience of them. No one would think of condemning a reformer and consider him unworthy of a hearing simply because once upon

style), and ordered their common affairs. The Bannatyne Club rescued the Cross and its appendages from ruin some years ago, revived the guild, made gentlemen-chapmen (including Sir Walter Scott), chose kings, ate guild-dinners, and otherwise played themselves on the sacred spot after the manner of antiquarian good-fellows."—"Some Account of Itinerating Libraries and their Founder," privately printed, 1856.

a time he had practised what he afterwards preached against. And Miller probably had some first-hand knowledge of the evils of the literature he set himself to correct. He had printed and published at least two chapbooks which could not be distinguished in tone and matter from the most objectionable that were in circulation.

In pursuance of his plan Miller published during 1802–4 a series of small booklets to which he gave the name of "Cheap Tracts." They numbered twenty in all, and dealt with various informative topics. According to his usual economical method he published them afterwards in volume form, and even reproduced some of them in his *Cheap Magazine*, so extending their usefulness. In tract form the issue amounted to 60,000, or on the average 3,000 to each.

Miller seems to have varied in his opinion as to the good done by these publications. In a circular he issued in 1812, he says that "having been mostly disposed of to wholesale booksellers, and resold by them to shopkeepers and hawkers, they must have long ere now obtained a wide circulation, and he trusts have done some good. But as the sameness of an article is not well calculated

for the wholesale market alone, as the home consumption for these was but trifling, and as the exchange business affords but a slow return to lighten the burden of a heavy outlay, the publisher had little encouragement to proceed. More recently some clergymen in Dumfriesshire formed themselves into a society for the avowed purpose of publishing and disseminating tracts of a similar tendency, but having sent two volumes into the world, it would appear from report that they also have met with no inducement to continue their undertaking; perhaps in the former instance too little regard was paid to a home or local circulation, in the latter too much." Writing twenty years later, however, he is more convinced that his labours had been instrumental in doing much to destroy love for the deleterious chapbook. "I need scarcely remind my more aged contemporaries," he wrote in 1833, "that my avowed motive at the time for bringing out that multitudinous host of tracts in so cheap and humble a form was in order to counteract the dangerous tendency of that noxious description which were then so abundantly scattered about the country through the medium of what has been so emphatically styled 'that copious source of mischief, the

hawker's basket'; and those who will take the trouble of recollecting the Lothian Toms, the John Cheaps, the Wise Willies, and other pernicious trash, which I shall not pollute my pages by naming, and compare them with the substitutes I had been at so much pains to put in their place, I trust will do me the justice to say that my motives were good. . . . Even that comparatively harmless production, 'The Laird of Coul's Ghost,' at one time a great favourite in this neighbourhood in consequence of its being represented in the tract as the theatre of the repeated appearance of the unearthly visitor, seems to have entirely vanished at the crow of the cock in No. 19; and the 'Witty Sayings of George Buchanan' have sunk in the estimation of the more intelligent young men of latter times before the far more rational entertainment to be derived from that most excellent series of 'Councils to Young Men' in No. 5." Again he says that "since the publication of my Cheap Tracts in 1802–3 the complexion of the contents of the hawker's basket has undergone a very sensible alteration or material change to the better"; and his son James roundly affirms that they "superseded the common trash of the hawker's basket."

It is an exaggeration, pardonable perhaps, but still an exaggeration, for the processes of education were already tending to make such publications impossible, and various economic movements were helping to the same end. There seems to be no reason, however, to doubt that Miller's efforts had their effect on the general result, and he at least deserves credit for having perceived the evil that lay in the circulation of the ordinary chap-book, and for taking all methods open to him for counteracting it.

Meantime Miller was being forced into another development of his business. His shelves were becoming crowded and it was necessary that he should relieve the pressure. "What with manufacturing, exchanging and purchasing at sales, etc., my book stock had accumulated to such an extent that the off-going or outlet by auctions, wholesale journeys, etc., bore no proportion to the same." He determined on a bold move—to sell wholesale to the wholesale booksellers themselves. He is astonished at his own audacity, for he knew that "few country booksellers of my standing and time of life would have attempted" such a course. "Was it not sufficient," he asks himself, "that I should have been delug-

ing all the neighbouring villages and hamlets by my auctions? Was it not more than sufficient that I should have been carrying on my operations in the usual wholesale form across the country from Berwick-upon-Tweed to the good town of Ayr, and from the banks of the Forth to the wilds of Galloway, but I must now commence the serious operation of carrying my attack into the great literary citadel of the country and there attempting to sell wholesale to the wholesale booksellers themselves!"

It certainly required considerable courage in a country bookseller to say to his brethren of the capital that he had anything worth their notice, but his confidence in attacking Edinburgh was justified. The sale was held in Metcalf's Tavern in the Lawnmarket on February 9, 1802, and continued for two days. To ensure an attendance he issued a printed catalogue of the books to be sold, undertook to give credit on a graduated scale to all purchasers, and provided a free dinner-table before business began to all who cared to sit down. The result was satisfactory, although the auctioneer had to contend with the presence of the city magistrates in another room. They were busy eating the

"deid-chack," as the ghastly meal after an execution was called. Miller returned home with cash or bills for £300 in his pocket, and with the determination to continue this method of disposing of his stock.

(FROM SUTHERLAND'S "POEMS.")
Probably by Bewick.

CHAPTER VI

HIS FAMILY—REMOVES PRESS TO HADDINGTON

MILLER'S wife died on June 25, 1802, leaving her husband with five sons and a daughter.[1] As subsequent events showed, he was not happy in his family. James, who was his father's chief hope, fell into evil ways even before the old man died. After serving an apprenticeship to a trade, and starting business on his own account, John went to America and practically disappeared from knowledge, his father hearing of him only in a roundabout fashion. Robert, who made excellent promise, died on August 12, 1828, while still a young man. Elizabeth, who remained at home for the most

[1] James, born December 21, 1791; George, June 10, 1794; William, October 24, 1796; John, March 22, 1800; Robert, April 18, 1802; Elizabeth, February 14, 1799. A daughter died in infancy. A special account of James is given later.

part and sometimes assisted in the shop, died unmarried in August 1837, a year after her father.

Miller's second son, George, proved the black sheep of the family even while his father lived, and for years was a source of distress to him. In spite of his "talents and superior abilities" Miller declares he became "a lasting torment and burden to me and a useless drone in society to himself." So extraordinary was his behaviour that doubts were expressed as to his sanity even while he was yet a youth—doubts which the course of time amply justified. Repeated attempts were made to fix him to a special occupation, but every effort failed. His restlessness began as soon as his apprenticeship to a local draper ended. He appeared unable to remain long in any business. His father was anxious that he should become a surgeon, and he was apprenticed to a firm in Dunfermline, where he might be under the supervision of his uncle. That arrangement lasted for a few weeks only. Again he was bound to an Edinburgh engraver. For this profession he showed some aptitude and produced very creditable work in a very few weeks. But so erratic and restless was his nature that he

would be bound by no engagement and deserted this employment also on the shortest notice. The strange thing was that he knew perfectly well how reprehensible his conduct was, and could write about it in terms of the severest condemnation. An article from his pen appeared in the *Cheap Magazine*, when he was in the midst of his fluctuating resolves, and it began by saying that he knew "from sad experience the many flighty sallies or notions which seize the juvenile mind, and the power that these fanciful ideas have over the actions of youth by either actuating them to do that which is wrong or prompting them to spend in idleness (the bane of happiness) that portion of life when the foundation of the future man should be laid."

He made several journeys by sea, and on the whole showed a preference for a life afloat. No one on board the vessels in which he sailed, however, could long endure his eccentricities. While on a voyage to India his ongoings became so intolerable that the captain set him ashore at St. Helena, where by a week or two he missed seeing Napoleon landed a prisoner.

Although his father never actually assigned the book to him, there is no reason to doubt

that George was the author of a queer volume which Miller published in 1815. Its short title is "The Traveller's Guide to Madeira and the West Indies," and it gives an account of a voyage to these places—a voyage which George actually took in the preceding year. Its sub-title is a "Hieroglyphic Representation of Appearances and Incidents." The book is chiefly made up of a series of minute engravings in which the events of each day are set forth pictorially. In all there are no fewer than 125 pictures, the whole being accompanied by a running commentary. Neither the pictures nor the letter-press is of any value whatever. What little interest the volume possesses centres in the unusual method pursued in its production.

George's after-history does not make pleasant reading. His vagrant disposition continued for many years, but he ultimately settled down in Dunbar, where he fell under the influence of the drink habit. For a time he kept house alone, making his living as best he could. His mind at length gave way and he had to be confined. He died in the local asylum on the 19th of December, 1869, after having been an inmate of it for more than twenty years.

Plate 2d

Febr. 6th. 1. 7th. 8th. 2. 9th. 10th. 11th. 3.

12th. 4. 13th. 14th. 5.

15th. 16th. 6 17th. 18th.

19th. 20th. 21st. 22d. 23d. 24th. 25th.

26th. 27th. 28th. March 1st. 2d. =

= 7. 8. 9. 3d. =

11. 10. 4th. =

= 12. 5th. 13.

PAGE FROM "THE TRAVELLER'S GUIDE," BY GEORGE MILLER, JUNR.

To face p. 96.

Death of his Wife

Just before his wife died Miller found his prospects so bright that he seriously considered whether he should not remove to a place more suitable for his growing business than Dunbar, "communication with which and the country around is so circumscribed except in an indirect or roundabout way." Its situation handicapped his wholesale trade especially, but he hesitated to leave a town where he had "already succeeded in establishing a snug retail business and where his job printing was certainly succeeding to his utmost expectation considering the disadvantages arising out of the localities of the place." He was on the point of selecting a town—probably Leith—"where there are so many opportunities of conveyance to all parts of the kingdom by sea and land," but the death of his wife put an end to his search. With a young family dependent on him, he found it would be inadvisable to remove from his old home, sacred as it now was by "so many endearing ties."

His business continued to extend so rapidly that at the end of 1803 he was able to report that his job printing had "increased beyond all former precedent." Its growth had caused him to look out for larger printing premises, and by the end

of the year he had entered into possession. But even this was not enough to meet the demands of his trade, and he was forced to consider the possibility of occupying another post where he could better command the custom of the county. Haddington was naturally marked out as the most suitable spot. It occupied a "centrical position," and being the county town was the place where the main business of the district was transacted. His second marriage opened up the way for him to take possession of it.

His second wife was Helen Grieve, a native of Stenton, a village distant about five miles from Dunbar. Like his first marriage, his second had a spice of romance about it. For a time the lady was indifferent to his overtures, but she finally yielded. The manner of her surrender is best told in the husband's own words. "I happened to be in London on business," he says, "and how was I surprised one day to meet her in the street. 'Well met!' said I, 'the people will be saying we are away to be married. Suppose we go and get the business settled, and give them room to talk when we go home.' 'I'll go anywhere with you,' said she."

And so the matter was arranged, the wedding taking place on July 11, 1805. The union proved a remarkably happy one. As the rejoicing bridegroom afterwards said, he had "drawn once more an invaluable treasure in the lottery of matrimony." Mrs. Miller took a mother's care of his children, threw herself into his business with great energy, and did much to make the disappointments which ultimately overtook him less calamitous. He described her as the "tried associate in so many trials, the approved and proved solace in so long a train of protracted griefs." When the twenty-fifth anniversary of their wedding came round, Miller celebrated the happy occasion in an appropriate ode, which he prints in full in his autobiography. Mrs. Miller survived her husband.

Miller's determination to remove the printing part of his establishment to Haddington was come to suddenly, and he is not clear as to the reason for his precipitate action. "Circumstances had occurred," he says, "to make it *imperiously* necessary, if I wished to preserve to some of my own family the printing business which I had been at so much labour and pains to establish in the county, that I should remove that part of my

establishment to the county town *without delay*." The circumstances referred to seem to have been that the excellent prospects Haddington held out for a printing-press had attracted the attention of a possible rival, and it was necessary to forestall him. The transference was made at the end of May 1804.

The removal was rendered all the easier from the fact that Miller's brother John was now quite able to take over the supervision of the new business, and so relieve him of constant attendance upon it. The only real difficulty in working the two places was the want of adequate communication between the towns, but that obstacle was removed in the following October. A new coach then began running between Dunbar and Edinburgh, by way of Haddington, "a most fortunate occurrence for me," says Miller, "as it made the journey in future assume almost the appearance of stepping from one shop-door to the other, besides the great advantage it gave me in having my Haddington parcels carried free"—the latter privilege coming to him as agent for the coach owner.

A century ago Haddington was a somewhat different place from the sleepy hollow it has since

become. Then it was on the highway between Edinburgh and London, and the day was brightened by the thundering passage of the stage-coach on its way to either metropolis; now it is the terminus of a branch railway-line, and the main stream of traffic passes by on the other side of the hills out of its sight and hearing. As the centre of a wide and fertile district, its grain market was then probably the most important in the whole country. Its wide street afforded ample accommodation for the fairs in which the Scottish peasantry delighted, and the county courts held within it gave the town precedence over its neighbours. It could not boast of any literary life, but it had certain possibilities within it. For two years after midsummer 1810, Edward Irving taught school in the burgh and acted as tutor to that fiery genius, Jane Welsh Carlyle, whose father was a physician in the town. In 1812 Samuel Smiles, destined to become well known as the author of "Self-Help" and similar books, was born one of a large family in a house in the main street where the tiny recess under the stair in which he slept is still shown. He has left a vivid picture of his early days in his autobiography. These things, however, were still in the future

when Miller settled down in the town and by his press gave facilities to any literary life the old-fashioned place might contain. In ancient times the burgh from its situation had possessed some political and international importance. It must be confessed that in 1804 there was not much that indicated the possibility of revived interest in it through its literary performance.

The printing establishment thus set up included, besides John Miller, a pressman, a bookbinder, and two apprentices. The first six months' returns showed how amply Miller was justified in making the transference. "In a space not much exceeding six months," he says, "viz. from 4th June to 31st December, 1804, the amount of our job printing had exceeded the amount at Dunbar for the whole prosperous year preceding the 31st December, 1803." Almost as soon as the press was set up it obtained orders from the Town Council. These consisted chiefly of notices, or "advertisements," as they were called, to be posted about the town. The following bill was among the earliest presented to the Council, and may not be uninteresting as showing the kind of work the press did as well as the prices charged :—

Job Printing

1805.					s.	d.
Mar.	26	To	50	Advts., "Mad Dogs"	3	0
Aug.	19	„	50	do. "Breaking Gardens" ...	3	8
Sept.		„	100	do. "Lamplighters Wanted"	3	0
Nov.	2	„	50	do. "Regulations for New Flesh Market"	5	3
„	8	„	12	copies Illumination Bills	2	0
Dec.	2	„	50	Advts., "Lord Nelson's Suffrs"	2	6
„	6	„		do. Subscriptions for do. ...	2	6
1806.						
Jan.		„	100	Advts., "Mad Dogs"	4	2
Aug.	22	„	50	do. "Riotous Persons" ...	3	0
Nov.	10	„	100	Orders of the Magistrates, &c. ...	6	8
1807.						
May	6	„	50	Advts., "Higglers," &c.	4	0
					£1	19 3

It will be observed that the account indicates what was done in the burgh when news reached it of the victory at Trafalgar Bay and the death of Nelson. Miller also became the town's agent in procuring books for the municipal library. In the first year the citizens' indebtedness to him amounted to £21 17s., and this sum was the total after the bill had been discounted by 10 per cent.

One severe disappointment Miller met with at the beginning of his career in the county town. About the time he began his extended business,

the King's Printers made a determined effort to secure adequate recognition of their privilege. It had been the custom for all work required in connection with the lieutenancy of counties to be done by local printers. This the King's Printers now claimed as their own, and the authorities had reluctantly to recognize that what they demanded lay within their prerogative. The decision was particularly hard on Miller, who had removed to Haddington so that, among other things, he might the more effectually hold the very work of which he was now to be deprived. "It was certainly a most disastrous and dispiriting piece of intelligence," he said, "however softened down by the kind offices and friendly bearing of my Haddington friends. To those who in their several settled situations were obliged to submit to it merely that an already huge and overgrown monopolist might have his income increased, it was sufficiently vexatious; but to me who had just taken such a decisive step and put myself to so much expense in order to secure it more firmly, it really bore much the appearance of what, alas! I have so often experienced, the dashing the cup from my lips after it had almost reached them."

It does not appear where Miller secured premises

for his printing establishment, but towards the end of 1804 he made an offer to the magistrates of Haddington to take two shops from them on a lease of seven years. These stood one on each side of the main entrance to the Flesh Market, a building which had just been erected for the convenience of the town. One shop he appropriated to each of the departments, for he had determined again to associate the trade of a general merchant with that of a bookseller. With as much formality as possible he opened business in them on May 25, 1805. It is apparent that Miller came to rue the bargain he had made with the town authorities, for his son James has this curious note in his "History." Speaking of the market he says, "The two shops in the front which are now let for £6 each were at first let conjointly on a lease of seven years at £30 sterling per annum." The whole building was removed some years ago to make room for an approach to a new bridge over the Tyne.

In accordance with an agreement into which the brothers had entered, John continued in charge of the Haddington branch for a year, leaving at Whit-Sunday 1805 to make preparations for starting business on his own account

elsewhere. His removal left Miller in a strait. He had not yet a son sufficiently advanced to undertake the supervision of the extension, for James was only in his fourteenth year. The merchandise business, however, was so promising that he determined to take up his residence in Haddington with his family and place the Dunbar shop in the charge of his mother-in-law. He accordingly rented a house in the county town, and transferred his home to it in July 1805.

The change did not work out well. The house he had taken proved unsuitable, and its inland situation affected the general health of his family. His frequent absences from home made him largely dependent upon hired servants, and they were a constant source of anxiety to him. They were either deficient as workmen or remained with him too short a time. A pressman who had left his employment threatened to set up in opposition to him, and to add to his troubles his mother-in-law fell into bad health : she died in December 1806. Rumours were also being circulated to his disadvantage at Dunbar, for it was alleged that he intended abandoning the town altogether, and a rival was already seeking to secure what he might leave. All those things

made him resolve to return to his native town, which he did after one year's exile from it. He did not, however, give up all residence in Haddington. He transformed the back premises of one of the shops into a residence, and kept up "the appearance of a dwelling-house" there for some time longer.

WITCHES RIDING THE STORM.

(From James Miller's "Luckless Drave.")

CHAPTER VII

BUSINESS LIFE—DUNBAR LIFEBOAT

DURING the next eight years Miller's business life flowed on with the changes that are inseparable from work of the kind. He found considerable difficulty in adequately supervising the Haddington branch, and it occasionally caused him so much trouble and anxiety that he was more than once tempted to relinquish it altogether. When he removed his home back to Dunbar he had put his son James in charge of the press he left behind, and had given him his wife's brother as an assistant and as a companion to him in the house. A female relative was at the same time set over the grocery department. James's uncle, however, proved untrustworthy, and had to be dismissed. Even James himself became refractory, and deserted his work for several months in the winter of 1807. It was all very disheartening, but Miller never lost hope,

and did his best to keep the establishment going. He had his reward, for in the end he overcame all his difficulties.

The temporary defection of his son touched Miller deeply; but though the incident had its bitter side, he yet found that it had a gracious aspect also. The printing business in Haddington had continued to grow in importance, and Miller speedily discovered that the experience his son had gained in the Edinburgh offices while he was away was invaluable to him. In the autumn of 1808 he issued a new library catalogue, and according to that curious habit he had of sometimes admitting the public into his confidence, he refers to the attempt to oust him from Dunbar, and then speaks of his son's return to his service. It had set him free, he declared, to attend to the Dunbar branch more vigorously than ever. "The public already know," he said, "that he is now again able to devote the most of his time and attention to his concerns here. Indeed, since the return of his son from Edinburgh, where he had been for a short time for improvement in the printing line, the business at Haddington had been conducted in a way highly satisfactory, and in such a manner as to occasion little trouble from that quarter."

As a matter of fact, James had sown his wild oats for the time being, and though he was occasionally restless, he never again deserted his father. In his hands the printing-press continued to provide a handsome income. In the year 1810 it earned nearly £300 by jobbing, and Miller was able to say that the work obtained in Haddington alone supplied what "might have been considered a little fortune in itself."

After occupying the premises in which he had started business in Dunbar for nearly twenty years, Miller removed to others on the opposite side of the High Street, and almost next door to the inn which in those days was the centre of the life of the town. The lease of seventeen years was to run from Whit-Sunday 1811, but by arrangement he was able to occupy the building more than six months in advance. The year 1810 Miller described as "big with important events" for him, and not least among these was this change of address. For the sake of convenience he had long wished to have his dwelling-house attached to his shop, but in a small town like Dunbar, where suitable accommodation was restricted, this was not always possible. Miller, however, had now attained his wish, and he "was

GEORGE MILLER'S SHOP AND DWELLING-HOUSE, DUNBAR.

To face p. 110.

housed and shopped under one roof." A year or two later he was able to arrange with a neighbour for the use of a small garden plot behind. He thus for the first time acquired an open space for his own private recreation, apparently a small matter, but one that gave its tenant unbounded satisfaction.

To make the shop fit his requirements extensive alterations were carried out at Miller's expense. The whole front was renovated, and given the appearance it carries to-day. Here he was destined to spend the remainder of his business career. A tenant was not found for the place he had left, and he was accordingly allowed to utilize it for bookbinding and for evening auctions during the following winter. Miller was greatly pleased with this arrangement, for it prevented a rival taking possession of it till he was fairly established in his new premises.

In 1810 local magnates founded the ill-fated East Lothian Bank, with the head office in Dunbar, and pressure was brought to bear on Miller to make him transfer his custom to it. He had hitherto dealt with the British Linen Company's Bank, and his sense of justice and gratitude was outraged by the suggestion. Refusal meant a

probable loss of trade, for those interested in the new venture were powerful enough to injure him in his business; but he steadily refused to forsake those who had treated him well. In the end he compromised so far as to send a part of his custom the way of the new bank. His action in this matter is not of great importance, but the story of his resistance is the occasion of an interesting fact coming to light. "My credit," he says, "was such that I was looked up to as a safe depository for many of those small sums which might now with little trouble, although I cannot say with more safety at the time, have been lodged with some of the banking companies in the place." Perhaps no better testimony could have been given to his personal character and to his financial reputation than that he should have been thus entrusted with the small savings of the poorer classes.

For some time Miller was worried by two law pleas, which were begun about 1810, and in both of which he was the defender. One had to do with an account for £35, which Miller said he had paid, and which the pursuer affirmed he had not. His experiences in the various courts made him add his voice to the many who have vitu-

perated the law and its delays. "Little as I had been accustomed to think of the law," he said, "the decisions in this case gave me a still more disgusting idea of it." So great was his sense of injustice that he made up his mind to "publish the whole proceedings and bring the matter before the public." His opponents heard of his purpose, and wrote that "If you take any improper freedom with us in your intended publication we shall not fail to follow out such a measure in law as the case may require." The threat was enough, and Miller refrained.

Miller had never been quite satisfied with the premises he had taken in Haddington from the Town Council. Three years after he entered them he had to carry on a "disagreeable correspondence" with the magistrates because the shops "had never been brought to a finished state." The effect of his remonstrance is not stated, but he determined to end his occupancy with the termination of the lease at Whit-Sunday 1812. The town clerk did make an effort to retain Miller as a tenant, but the latter had come to the conclusion that it would be to his advantage to rent other premises. A suitable place was secured on lease in the High Street, and the Millers, father

and son, continued to occupy the shop till the business was finally lost in 1833.

Another circumstance must have influenced Miller in determining on a change of situation : it would coincide with a fundamental change in the manner the Haddington business was henceforth to be conducted. The apprenticeship of his son James ended in April 1811, and after a year, part of which was spent in London, the latter was ready to enter into partnership with his father. As far back as February 16, 1806, James had been given a general charge of the Haddington press, but the responsibility could have been only nominal on account of his youth. He was now arrived at man's estate and able to enter into a business-like agreement with his father. This was effected in the spring of 1812, and at Whit-Sunday the firm became "George Miller & Son." The partnership extended to the printing establishment only and was continued till 1819.

It was while he was in the midst of these business and domestic perplexities that the opportunity occurred which enabled Miller to carry out his long-cherished plan for saving life at sea. "The rock-girt coast of Dunbar has been the theatre of many shipwrecks, and the sands of

Tyne the grave of many a gallant vessel," but although he had made a previous attempt to mitigate the disasters that took place, nothing had been done. A storm of exceptional severity broke out at the beginning of October 1808, and a wreck was driven ashore at Thorntonloch, a few miles from Dunbar, the crew perishing under peculiarly distressing circumstances.

Miller took advantage of the horror the tragedy created to renew his efforts. Through his exertions a movement to provide the coast with a lifeboat was initiated. He communicated with Henry Greathead, the inventor of a special form of lifeboat, to ascertain the probable cost, and associated with himself William Brown, a bank agent, and David Laing, a shipbuilder, as a local committee. With their sanction he prepared and sent out a printed appeal for subscriptions. "The want of a lifeboat," the document began, "has confessedly been often severely felt on this coast, and while such a want remains unsupplied it may still be the fate of many of the inhabitants of Dunbar and neighbourhood to witness 'the pelting of the pitiless storm' on the stranded vessel till some of the exhausted crew, like the poor boy at Thorntonloch, are got on shore only to ex-

change a watery grave for a land one—just to look gratefully in the face of their deliverers and then expire."

The result was altogether satisfactory. In the appeal Miller had said that he did not consider the apparent remissness in providing a boat was due "to any callous indifference or want of fellow-feeling in the inhabitants of the county to which he belongs," but simply to the lack of opportunity. The statement was amply justified by the response made to the circular. Not to encroach on what might be done at North Berwick, which stood equally in need of a life-saving equipment, the appeal was largely limited to the south-eastern portion of the county, and within a year a sum of nearly £400 was raised. Besides subscribing in money, Miller provided, free of charge, such printing as the scheme required.

A fully equipped boat was procured from Greathead, and a directorate composed of local gentlemen, at the head of whom stood the Earl of Haddington, was appointed. On the anniversary of the first meeting of the provisional committee the boat was declared ready for use, and on the following day it was called out to the

THE LIFEBOAT SAVING PART OF A CREW NEAR TYNEMOUTH CASTLE.

After a picture painted and engraved by W. Elmes and published by H. Greathead, the inventor, January, 1803. The copy from which the illustration is taken bears the inscription: "H. Greathead to Mr. George Miller, Dunbar."

(From a photo by Mr. T. T. Bisset, Dunbar.)

assistance of H.M. sloop *Cygnet*, which was in distress off the coast of Dunbar.

For a number of years good service was rendered by the lifeboat to the many ships that came to grief along the inhospitable shore. The last occasion on which it put to sea occurred at the close of 1816. When next it was needed it had fallen into decay and could not be used. The poor remains were brought to the hammer and disposed of by public roup in October 1829. By that time an improved build of boat had been devised, and the Royal Lifeboat Institution had been called into existence. Private effort was therefore less necessary, but Miller's work as a pioneer in this field of public service should not be forgotten.[1]

[1] About the time that the boat was procured Greathead sent to Dunbar a dozen copies of a picture of a lifeboat rescuing a shipwrecked crew at Tynemouth Castle. One of these was specially inscribed by the donor as a gift to Miller himself, and can still be seen in the town.

CHAPTER VIII

THE "CHEAP MAGAZINE"—CIRCULATING LIBRARY

EVER on the outlook for new and progressive ways of extending his business and increasing his usefulness, Miller in 1813 ventured on the difficult path of journalism. He could not have been ignorant of the many failures that marked that route in the past, but he believed that he was able to use a new method which promised success. He had done much business in occasional literature of an "improving" type, and had satisfied himself that there was an appetite for it in the country. His sales had been continuous and extended, and the only difference between the literature he proposed to issue, and what he had already succeeded in selling, was to be in regularity of issue and uniformity of price. As a matter of fact he republished several of his tracts in the pages of his new venture.

Miller laid elaborate plans for making his

intentions known. As early as June of the preceding year he scattered prospectuses of the proposed journal broadcast over the land. He addressed circulars to ministers and presbyteries, and enlisted the help of parish schoolmasters everywhere in obtaining subscribers. Confined mainly to Scotland, his efforts extended also to several of the centres of population in England. Everything possible was done to ensure success.

The first number of the *Cheap Magazine* was issued on January 14, 1813, the editor's birthday. It was a monthly duodecimo of forty-eight pages and carried the sub-title, "Poor Man's Fireside Companion," a name that was dropped at the beginning of the second volume. As was then customary, thirteen numbers were issued for the year, the last being named a "Supplement." The contents of the journal were of a miscellaneous character, and as the prospectus said, "the whole was adapted to the lowest capacity, calculated to promote the interests of religion, virtue, and humanity, and to dispel the shades of ignorance, prejudice, and error among the lower classes of mankind." Miller is frank enough to say that publication was undertaken "in the way of duty as well as in the way of business," and

there seems no reason to doubt that his chief object was to raise moral issues and to do what he could to promote right living among those who were showing signs of breaking beyond control. In the preceding year "shocking scenes that disgraced the streets of Edinburgh," as well as the execution of three miserable lads, had taken place in the capital, and these things had moved him to begin the periodical in the hope that its pages would aid in making such events impossible. On the title-page of his magazine he accordingly wrote that its purpose was the "prevention of crimes" and to "insure the peace, comfort, and security of society," as well as to give young and thoughtful minds "a taste for reading subjects of real utility."

From the first the *Cheap Magazine* was a great success. Miller, who described himself comprehensively as "not only the original and sole projector and editor, but the author of several of its leading papers and smaller pieces, as well as the printer and publisher, the seller and distributor," declares that of the first number "there were printed at different periods, but mostly if not all within the year, upwards of TWENTY-ONE THOUSAND COPIES!"—a

circulation which was then phenomenal. Concerning the magazine as a whole, his son wrote that it "was circulated in every parish in Scotland at a vast expense from the high price of carriage and postage," and that "15,000 to 20,000 copies were printed." He adds that "Haddington beheld the novel scene of three presses in motion which turned off twenty reams of paper in a week," not a large output in view of present-day printing developments, but noteworthy a century ago.

It is perhaps unnecessary to occupy space in describing the kind of matter that found its way into the pages of the magazine. Mental and moral improvement being the aim of everything that secured a place within it, the articles included stories of the primitive passions, the lessons of which were made painfully evident in almost every paragraph; poems that resembled Dr. Watts's well-known didactic verses; papers on the industrial arts and the commoner sciences; hints on etiquette and domestic conduct in every conceivable situation, as well as miscellaneous scraps of information. Social and family duties were constantly inculcated and warnings against infringements were made as solemn as possible.

Nothing was left to the imagination, everything was set down in such plain language that no mistake could be made. Many of the papers were on topics dealt with by the famous essayists of a former generation, but they had none of the fine English, the wide culture or the classical allusions of their predecessors. A few titles taken from one number will sufficiently indicate the nature of the contents :—"Summer Furnishes us with Images of Death"; "The Industrious Children"; "Dreadful Consequences of Gaming"; "Fatal Effects of Anger"; "Piety the Foundation of Good Morals"; "The Progress of Genius from Obscure and Low Situations to Eminence and Celebrity," an anticipation of Samuel Smiles's "Self-Help." With evident relish the editor inserted a poetical contribution, entitled "The Labourer's Repast or the Cheap Magazine." The lines halt and the rhymes are imperfect, but the verses show how the editor met the needs of the class to whom he appealed. Two stanzas will suffice.

Ye careless and indolent ! open your eyes,
Ah ! halt not, I pray you, between :
And you that are young, here's matter to prize,
Contained in the *Cheap Magazine*.

Consider, ye Parents ! on you it depends
To bend the young Sprig while it's green ;
I'm apt to believe, you'll accomplish your ends,
By a purchase of this Magazine.

Miller himself was responsible for a large proportion of the letterpress that appeared in the journal, and he afterwards compiled two volumes from his articles. Besides being aided by papers sent in voluntarily he had the help of several writers whose names have now lost all significance. Dr. Mavor, an English writer on moral subjects and somewhat celebrated in his day, provided the preface. Chief, however, among Miller's contributors was Mrs. Beatrice Grant, a lady whose literary attainments and services to himself Miller was never weary of extolling. Belonging to the Campbells of Duntroon, she was the sister of that Sir Neil who accompanied Napoleon to Elba, and the widow of the minister of Duthil, a parish in the eastern highlands of Inverness-shire. Two volumes long since forgotten—" Popular Models and Impressive Warnings for the Sons and Daughters of Industry," and " Intellectual Education "—came from her pen.

It is to-day difficult to discover wherein the attraction of the *Cheap Magazine* lay. It was

fairly well printed, but the paper on which it was produced was poor and the illustrations were wretched. Its tone was severe—and there was little or no brightness in the writing. But there is abundant evidence that it met with widespread acceptance. Church courts passed resolutions approving of it, just as at a later date they condemned Norman MacLeod's *Good Words*. Well-known divines sent testimonials to the editor. Press notices were laudatory, and men of such diverse schools as William Wilberforce, Lindley Murray, and David Dale commended it. There can be no doubt that it met a distinct need, and this along with the great enterprise of the editor and printer in pushing the sales everywhere explains its success.

The Chamberses of Edinburgh have been blamed for not giving greater honour to the *Cheap Magazine* as a pioneer of popular periodical literature. In describing the rise of their famous *Edinburgh Journal*, William Chambers mentions several magazines which the brothers evidently had in mind when they made the venture—their own *Kaleidoscope* of 1821, the London *Mirror* of 1822, and the *Edinburgh Cornucopia* of 1831, as well as the Constable

Miscellanies. But Miller's magazine finds no place in the roll of honour, nor does any influence it may have exerted on their plans, it is complained, ever appear to have received acknowledgment at their hands.

This, however, is to claim for the *Cheap Magazine* a place it is hardly entitled to fill. In their "Gazetteer of Scotland," published a year before the appearance of Miller's "Latter Struggles," Robert Chambers did ample justice to the public service rendered by the little magazine. Speaking of the "works of a popular nature calculated to promote the interests of religion, virtue, and humanity among the lower orders" that issued from the Dunbar Press, the writer adds, "One of them was a periodical styled the *Cheap Magazine*, which though conducted on an unambitious plan was certainly an undertaking in some respects in advance of the age. It appeared in the year 1814; afforded a considerable mass of paper and print once a month at 4d., and was filled with matter calculated to instruct, as well as amuse, the two great classes who mostly require instruction, the young and the poor. Such a work, as it was rather a design of the present time than of

that when it appeared, might surely be tried again with better hopes of success than at first. The work at present which approaches nearest to it is the *Gaelic Messenger* of Dr. MacLeod." On the whole this fairly represents the value of the *Cheap Magazine*, and the part it played in educating the public for the popular periodical literature that appeared twenty years later. Miller himself uttered no complaint of being overlooked, although he wrote accounts of his magazine after *Chambers's Journal* had begun its issue. No one who compares the two papers will discover much that the Edinburgh firm owed to their Haddington predecessor.[1]

[1] The claim to be the pioneer of cheap modern periodical literature was early made on Miller's behalf. After his death a eulogy was pronounced over him, and Timperley in his "Dictionary of Printers and Printing," published in 1839, quotes the following lines:—

Within thy native district, first to rear
The press, which in thy hands was doomed to wear
A chaster form; no more from door to door
The lounging pedler hawked his poisoned lore;
For now subservient to one virtuous end,
Amusement with instruction thou didst blend.
And, lo! where Brougham and Chambers blaze in day,
Thou "went before, and gently cleared the way";
Unmindful of the magic of a name,
In secret toil'd and "blushed to find it fame!"

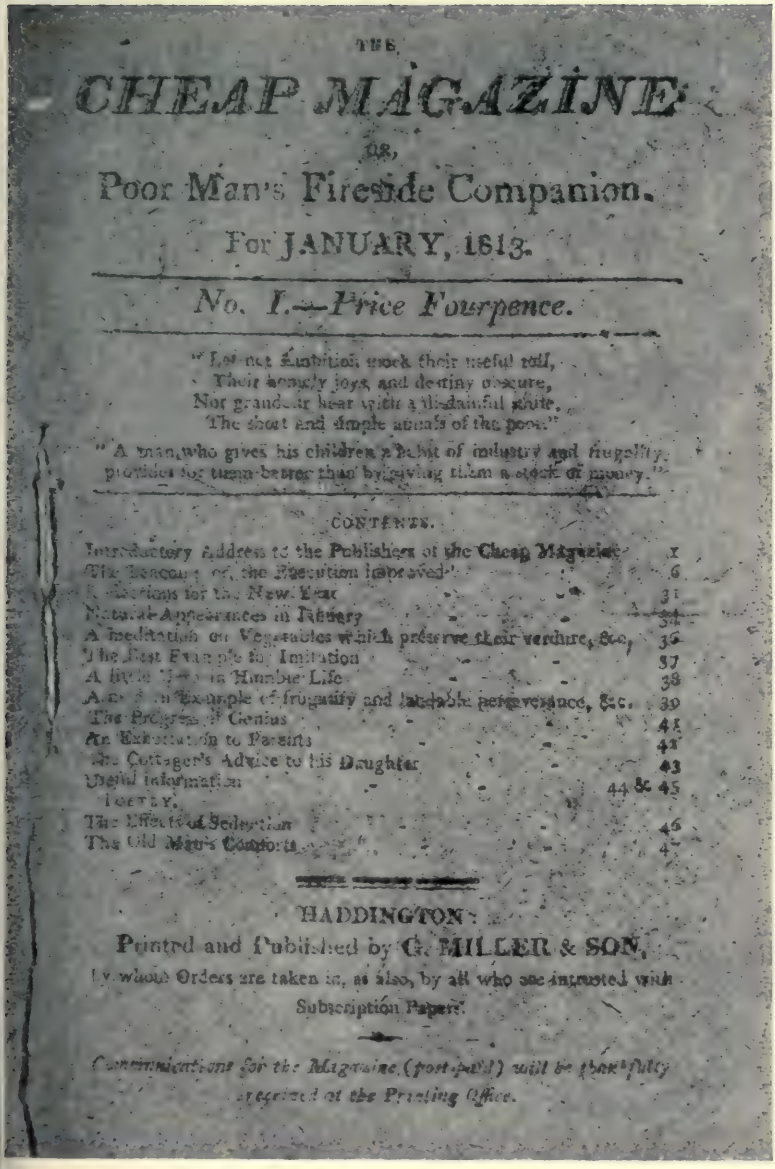
The truth is that there were cheap and popular magazines in Scotland long before Miller's publication. Ruddiman's *Weekly Magazine*, which was begun in 1768, for example, provided thirty-two pages weekly, and according to Arnot, the historian of Edinburgh and its contemporary, "as this was afforded very cheap, the publication was very successful. Indeed, it became so in a degree unprecedented in Scotland, for in winter 1776 the number of copies sold amounted to 3,000 weekly."

The merit of Miller's publication was that it reached the farm labourer and the remote villager, a class for which no special provision had hitherto been made. Its forerunners had sought to capture the interest of readers variously described as "courteous," "ingenuous," "polite," or as "gentlemen of taste": the *Cheap Magazine* catered for those whom without offence it called "the lower orders," and satisfied their needs in a way that corresponded to their attainments.

The reference to Lord Brougham doubtless arises from the fact that in 1825 he published his "Practical Observations upon the Education of the People," in which he recommended the establishment of Book Clubs or Reading Societies.

Its public showed their appreciation by buying the paper in thousands. Its purpose was avowedly didactic, and the marvel is that it succeeded so well at a time when no special religious fervour existed. It made its way to great centres of population as well as to country hamlets. Sir J. M. Barrie found a copy in his father's house, and in "A Window in Thrums" refers to it affectionately as "The Cheapy," a name which has evidently sprung from his own kindly remembrance of it. Its monthly appearance accustomed the common people to a regular supply of literature, and the many subsequent reprints of it that issued from the Haddington press helped to keep interest alive, and so prepared the way for the enthusiastic reception accorded to the cheap literature of Charles Knight and the Chamberses when it appeared twenty years later.

After the *Cheap Magazine* had existed for two years it was withdrawn. It seems impossible to discover the complete reason for the stoppage. Its editor indicates that it began the second year of publication with a circulation "now much reduced," but still "very respectable." The demand, however, although not so keen, con-



THE

CHEAP MAGAZINE:

OR,

Poor Man's Fireside Companion.

For JANUARY, 1813.

No. I.—Price Fourpence.

"Let not Ambition mock their useful toil,
Their homely joys, and destiny obscure,
Nor grandeur hear with a disdainful smile,
The short and simple annals of the poor."

"A man who gives his children a habit of industry and frugality, provides for them better than by giving them a stock of money."

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HADDINGTON:

Printed and Published by G. MILLER & SON,

To whom Orders are taken in, as also, by all who are intrusted with Subscription Papers.

Communications for the Magazine (post-paid) will be thankfully received at the Printing Office.

COVER OF NO. I, "CHEAP MAGAZINE."

To face p. 1 8.

tinued to show a desire on the part of the public for its circulation. But Miller evidently thought he had better bring the venture to a close. It had been the fashion in the preceding half-century not to continue the issue of any magazine beyond the fixed limit of a few numbers, and to end publication when there was sufficient material to make two or three respectable volumes. The conductors did not wish their journals to outlive their usefulness and popularity, and were besides anxious to have them complete upon their shelves before they reached unmanageable proportions in point of bulk. Several of the more successful were resuscitated with such changes in their appearance, price, and contents as experience had shown to be warranted. Miller followed this later precedent and immediately put another in place of the one he had withdrawn.

The last issue of the *Cheap Magazine* took place in December 1814. *The Monthly Monitor and Philanthropic Museum* sent out its first number in the following January. In design it resembled its predecessor closely, although the price was somewhat higher. The editor and principal contributor was still Miller himself,

and it contained continuations of several papers he had begun in the *Cheap Magazine*. It made greater claims to literary quality, although Miller's son wrote that both periodicals were "rather of an instructive than literary nature."

The *Monitor* expired in December after twelve monthly numbers had been published. Its editor had by that time undertaken another branch of bookselling which required all the attention he could give it. His own literary resources and material were becoming exhausted, and the novelty of the scheme was also wearing off in the public mind. In chronicling the death of two other journals that had been published in Haddington in 1822 and 1828, Miller's son says that "the country-town is situated too near the fountain-head of letters in the metropolis for such publications to succeed." The *Monitor* had no doubt to suffer the competition of the capital, but the real reason for its disappearance was probably the financial difficulties which were even then beginning to be felt by its publisher. The magazine was ended with an indication that it might reappear as a quarterly, but events that speedily crowded in on Miller made that course impossible.

It was while he was engaged in these periodical ventures that Miller transferred his lending library to Haddington. As he states in a circular addressed to his Dunbar customers, he was induced to make the change "because the greater part of the books had already passed through their hands." The books were removed in June 1814 and placed under the care of his son James. In the same month he published a catalogue giving the names of 2,500 volumes the library contained.

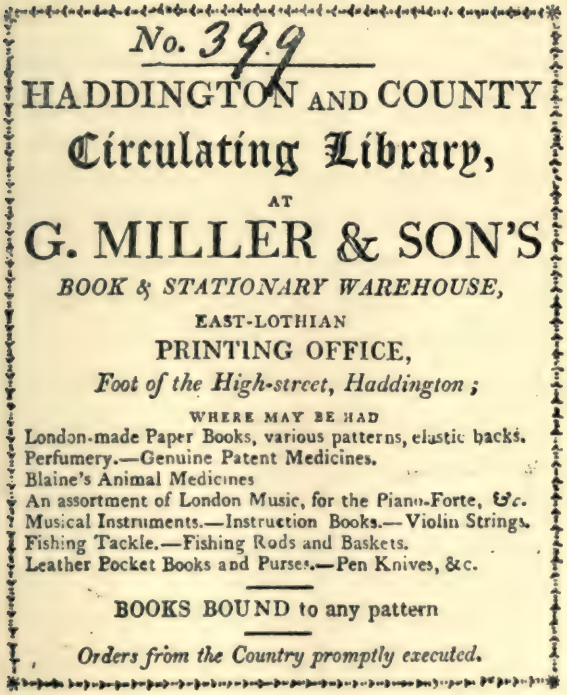
The library did not prove successful in the county town, and within a few years the collection was dispersed. Miller felt the failure keenly. "If the establishment was allowed to fall to pieces," he says, "it was none of my fault. I did what I could to make myself useful." It is evident from the bitter way in which he speaks of the Itinerating Library scheme started by Samuel Brown of Haddington in 1817,[1] that he considered himself ousted

[1] Brown was the son of the famous Bible commentator, and held the office of chief magistrate in the burgh. The plan of his libraries was to place a collection of fifty volumes in a selected centre where the books would be at the disposal of readers for two years free of cost. At the end of that time they were replaced by a new set. By

from the field by that venture. It had apparently been urged on behalf of Brown's plan that it would ultimately benefit the bookseller by creating an appetite for reading. Miller's experience proved the fallacy of the expectation. He discovered that those who were able to obtain their reading for nothing were unlikely ever to pay for it. He was specially offended because Brown by his new scheme practically ignored all his efforts in the past. "It is evident," he says, "that East Lothian should have been the last place to which these gentry should have turned their attention. But it unfortunately so happens that there are many well-meaning people in the world who are very unwilling to help forward any laudable measure except they themselves take the lead, and others who are ready to object to any selection or collection of books in which they have not been consulted." The opposition may perhaps be in part explained by Miller's last phrase. He had already come into conflict with one of the warmest supporters of

the year 1830 forty collections were itinerating among thirty-one towns and villages of East Lothian alone. The scheme spread to Ireland and the colonies and even to St. Petersburg.

Brown's plan. This person had challenged him because he had printed the bills of certain strolling players, and some sharp letters had passed between them. It is possible that Miller had, in some of the books he had placed before the public, again offended the notions of propriety entertained by this man and his colleagues.


No. 399
HADDINGTON AND COUNTY
Circulating Library,
AT
G. MILLER & SON'S
BOOK & STATIONARY WAREHOUSE,
EAST-LOTHIAN
PRINTING OFFICE,
Foot of the High-street, Haddington;
WHERE MAY BE HAD
London-made Paper Books, various patterns, elastic backs.
Perfumery.—Genuine Patent Medicines.
Blaine's Animal Medicines
An assortment of London Music, for the Piano-Forte, &c.
Musical Instruments.—Instruction Books.—Violin Strings.
Fishing Tackle.—Fishing Rods and Baskets.
Leather Pocket Books and Purses.—Pen Knives, &c.
BOOKS BOUND to any pattern
Orders from the Country promptly executed.

CHAPTER IX

CANVASSING—TRADE DEPRESSION—BANKRUPTCY

AFTER steadily plying his business for years along the routine lines indicated, Miller was induced to make a new departure. In the *Monthly Monitor* for July 1815 he has the following paragraph under the heading of "The Increase of Knowledge." "We notice, as matter of record, that within these few years a considerable circulation of books and of useful knowledge has taken place in consequence of a regularly organized system of canvassing for orders from house to house. Instead of depending on the slow and uncertain effects of advertisements in the magazines and in the newspapers, certain publishers of cheap books and of works in weekly numbers, now keep entire corps of pedestrian travellers, who canvass every town, village, and farm-house, under

the direction of county or district agents. The success of these publications is one effect of the increased establishments for educating the poor." The paragraph was written after Miller had himself determined to use the new methods.

Selling books in parts was not indeed new. For many long years the method had been used by energetic booksellers. Almost half a century before the poet Crabbe had sung of the extent to which it had been carried :—

> Our nicer palates lighter labours seek,
> Cloyed with a folio-*Number* once a week ;
> Bibles, with cuts and comments, thus go down :
> E'en light Voltaire is *Numbered* through the town :
> Thus physic flies abroad, and thus the law,
> From men of study, and from men of straw. . . .

But the business had developed on new lines. Publishers and booksellers were no longer content to await customers behind their shop counters. They carried their bargains to the very doors of their clients, and it was by this advance that Miller desired to benefit.

With considerable dramatic impressiveness he relates how he took the first step. He was sitting idling in his shop on the afternoon of the 11th of April, 1815, when William Gracie, who was

well known to him as a bookseller and printer of some reputation in Berwick-upon-Tweed but whom he had never seen before, called upon him to while away a period of waiting in the town. Miller afterwards hints that the visit was more of design than of accident, and subsequent events proved that he had to do with a man who was not only keen in business but also not over-scrupulous in the means he took to extend it. Unsuspicious of these things, however, Miller cordially welcomed his visitor, whose coming seemed most appropriate at the time. He had been considering the propriety of adopting the new system, which was "becoming the favourite hobby of our most industrious and enterprising booksellers," and here was the man who could advise!

Gracie had been engaged in the business for some time, and his report was altogether satisfactory. He laid special inducements before Miller to follow his example. He was printing certain well-known books in parts, he said, and would supply these to him on easy terms as well as procure others for him on equally favourable conditions if he resolved to adopt the plan and would undertake not to encroach on districts

where Gracie was already working. The ready money which the scheme promised, and which was an inducement to a country bookseller, finally overcame any fears Miller might have had, and before his visitor left "he had become a whole-, instead of a half-, hearted convert to the propriety of embarking in a concern that held out such bright and golden prospects."

If Gracie's call was a casual one, he had reason to congratulate himself on its result. Miller at once involved himself deeply in the business, for at this first interview he made purchases from Gracie to the extent of over £1,200, a sum raised to nearly £1,400 by the following July. In view of some of Gracie's actions afterwards, this plunge by Miller into such expense was rashness itself, but at the time he had no doubt of the soundness of his course. His cash trade averaged from £140 to £150 per week, and what had he to fear, he asks. "I can show by my books and other documents that my weekly receipts at that flourishing period would have covered the whole in two or three months; when at any time upon an emergency I could raise as much in the same time by means of my wholesale sales to the trade; when I had as a reserve two

great friends at court, ready to assist me on any occasion that I might consider it of advantage to avail myself of their services; and when I had besides another friend at not a hundred miles' distance who made me welcome to command his services to the extent of his purse or his means at any time; and when (let that consideration never be forgotten) the being put in possession of so many complete works and such a respectable collection to begin with in the number line, must have enabled me to open up new resources and to widen considerably those which I had previously been in the habit of availing myself of."

Having convinced himself of the rosy tints of the future, Miller proceeded to lay his plans. He went shares with Gracie in an edition of Cruden's "Concordance," which Gracie was printing, and a few months later entered into a similar agreement with his monitor in regard to Brown's "Bible Dictionary." By the beginning of October he had his agents working from centres as far apart as Cockburnspath, Haddington, Stirling, Aberdeen, Dunfermline, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Newcastle, and Thurso.

As a business method canvassing, or the "number-trade" as it is sometimes called, has

not commended itself to all. Writing in 1854, after it had had some years to approve itself, Charles Knight denounced it in unmeasured terms. "The system," he said, "is essentially that of forcing a sale; and the necessary cost of this forcing, called 'canvassing,' is sought to be saved in the quantity of the article canvassed, or in the less obvious degradation of its quality. The canvasser is a universal genius, and he must be paid as men of genius ought to be paid. He has to force off the commonest of wares by the most ingenious of devices. It is not the intrinsic merit of a book that is to command a sale, but the exterior accomplishments of a salesman. . . . He knows where there is a customer in the kitchen and the customer in the parlour. . . . No refusal can prevent him in the end leaving his number for inspection. . . . If an effort were honestly made to publish works really cheap, because intrinsically good, upon 'the canvassing system,' that system, which has its advantages, might be redeemed from the disgrace which now too often attaches to it, in the hands of the quacks who are most flourishing in that line." The method is certainly open to the abuses on the part of unscrupulous

agents, which Knight indicates, but there is no evidence that either Miller or those employed by him used undue means to extend their trade. On the other hand, there is ample testimony to the honourable way in which this and all the other branches of Miller's business were conducted.

In starting his new scheme Miller did not neglect the old. He continued pushing his sales to the trade. One which he held in Edinburgh lasted two days, and brought in over £800. Shortly after he had exceptional success with others in Glasgow and the West, whither he had gone with a large stock of books that included some from the shop of that doyen of Edinburgh booksellers, William Creech, lately deceased; he drew over £300.

He was particularly pleased with an event which took place on the latter journey. On the evening of September 6, 1815, he says, "My good friend, Mr. James Lumsden, proposed (which proposition was seconded and unanimously carried by all the gentlemen present) that I should have the FREEDOM OF THE TRADE OF THE CITY OF GLASGOW CONFERRED ON ME." He prints the exact honour in small capitals, but the privilege was not so great as the type would indicate.

What happened was merely that he was admitted an honorary member of the Glasgow Stationers' Company, a trade incorporation in the city. The minutes of that body show that the honour was formally conferred on November 7th on three Edinburgh booksellers as well as Miller, "they having paid the dues of admission to the treasurer with Clerk and Officers dues." The chairman at this meeting was James Lumsden, a prominent Glasgow bookseller of the time, and one who had been friendly with Miller for many years.

The honour done Miller by his Glasgow brethren put, as it were, a visible crown on his prosperity, for it was in 1815 that his fortune reached its highest. Years of strenuous toil and planning now seemed about to reap their reward. He had won a certain recognition through the widespread interest his periodicals had aroused. He had just started on a new extension of his business which promised further progress, and had, in addition to his own sons, paid agents at work all over the land. Everything seemed full of promise for further success, when suddenly his prosperity received an abrupt check.

A rapid change was passing over the trade of the country. The Battle of Waterloo had

brought to a close the long nightmare under which Europe had laboured, but as often happens after a great war, trade depression had almost immediately set in. This evil consequence of the cessation of hostilities was further increased by the introduction of machinery into manufactures, with the resultant loss of employment for many. Widespread misery ensued both in England and Scotland. The Government seemed helpless to bring relief, and disorder broke out in many places. The situation was such that a bookseller was likely to be among the first to suffer.

In the closing months of 1815 Miller had warning of the coming trouble. It became more and more difficult to obtain money. Gracie applied to him for a temporary accommodation, and in view of the assistance he had formerly received from him, Miller had now to advance him several hundred pounds. About the same time the bank began to press him to pay up an account which on the security of friends he had been allowed to overdraw to a considerable extent. To meet these and other demands made upon him, Miller sent his son to gather in all small sums due to him by his customers, especially

those in connection with the periodicals, the issue of which he had now definitely determined to abandon. The journey was highly disappointing. Debtors were unwilling or unable to settle their accounts: one country bookseller alone owed £38, which was never recovered. The friends on whom Miller had been accustomed to rely for aid found their own position so threatened that they could not afford to come to his assistance. To add to the seriousness of the situation several firms who were indebted to him fell bankrupt at the same time. On all hands trade was decreasing and money daily becoming scarcer.

Miller faced the coming disaster with a certain heroism. It was his custom to write a retrospect of each year as it passed. On his birthday in January 1816 he clearly foresaw what was to befall him, and he wrote: "The Almighty God, who is now the witness of my most secret thoughts, knows that it is my anxious aim, my first ambition, to do justice to the world; that for this, as well as to provide for the wants of my dependents, I have toiled early and late, have traversed districts remote and contiguous, have busied my thoughts when the senses of many were locked in the slumbers of night, have been inces-

sant in my endeavours to make my various professions and callings useful to myself and the family—in short, that I have left no stone unturned that was within my power, aided by the kind help raised up by a beneficent Providence to my aid. But all will not do. If the accumulated pressure of so many storms shall, like the destruction of the whirlwind, end in the complete overthrow of my temporal concerns, yet shall they not rob me of the conscious satisfaction of having done all for the best. And I trust that in every state I shall be able to preserve that serenity of mind that nothing earthly gives nor can destroy. No! should failure after failure in these critical times continue to bereave me of my hard-earned substance, should events, calamitous as they were unexpected, even turn out more serious than I have yet imagined, should friends drop off as the danger becomes more apparent, and domestic broils and the unseemly behaviour of children make me drunk with the cup of adversity, so that, instead of being able to act a manly part at the helm, I can only behold the consummation of my misfortunes with a stupid gaze—in short, even although my dream should be realized and I should yet be overset in attempting to cross the

stream, yet will I trust in God. Though He slay me, yet will I trust in God."

The summer of 1816 brought a temporary respite, and for a few weeks an improvement in Miller's affairs seemed possible. An energetic agent had gone to Inverness to open up a new district in that quarter. "The destruction of means and property," writes Miller, "that had so long raged at noonday in the West or manufacturing districts had not, I was told, reached these regions of the north, where also the demand for books was not as yet half supplied." A warehouse, worked by no fewer than five assistants, was set up in Inverness in Miller's name. The immediate returns, however, could not ward off the impending disaster, and he had to call together his creditors on September 7th.

In the circular summoning the meeting Miller ascribes his embarrassments to "the long-continued pressure of a heavy book-stock rendered unsaleable for a length of time by the peculiarly distressed condition of the country," and states his expectation to pay his debts in full if time were allowed him. His creditors were chiefly men engaged in the publishing trade—William Gracie of Berwick-upon-Tweed, William Caddel & Co.,

Oliver & Boyd, and Constable & Co. of Edinburgh—along with one or two distillers. The circular sent out to absent creditors gives an interesting inventory of his assets. It is as follows :—

	£	s.	d.
Books in numbers, etc., per inventory	4,221	5	0
Books in quires	2,074	12	1
Novels lately published, etc., in quires	86	2	4
Books, done up	617	12	10
Odd books, etc.	38	19	10
Books in shop for sale	221	0	1
Writing papers and stationery in the shop	382	7	2
There appears to arise from book [stock], printing stock, etc., from a concern carried on with his son in Haddington	448	10	4
The remainder of Mr. Miller's stock consists of copper-plates, bookbinders' tools, furniture, hardware, perfumery, musical instruments, patent and other medicines, groceries, and miscellaneous articles, making together the sum of ...	1,044	1	4
There also appears to be due [to] Mr. Miller in book debts (including £255 4s. due by the concern at Haddington) the sum of	1,309	6	2
Debts due on articles on sale ...	122	10	1
	10,566	7	3

Set over against these assets were his liabilities, amounting to £9,520 7s. 8d.

His creditors did not take the same sanguine view of the market value of his estate as Miller. They cordially acknowledged his "industry, sobriety, and honesty," but considered that much of the worth of his stock was taken away through the impossibility of disposing of it quickly. In the end an arrangement for a payment of 16s. in the pound by instalments spread over the next two years was come to. "The security of his son, James Miller," was added to the undertaking, but, as events proved, the creditors never called on him to make good his father's deficiencies.

Miller did his best to carry out the bargain thus made. He extended his country sales so that he might as quickly and as advantageously as possible get rid of his surplus stock and meet the first call of his creditors. He employed several auctioneers, who without placing his name on their advertisements were yet his agents and altogether in his pay. Among these was Peter Cairns, a well-known and even notorious Edinburgh book-salesman. He was a great admirer of Goldsmith, and had edited and published an

edition of his works. At one time he had carried on a successful business, but had now fallen on evil days and was glad to be employed by Miller as an occasional auctioneer.

Cairns's peculiar personality made some of the early sales remunerative, but the times were everywhere unpropitious, and the returns Miller continued to receive were depressing reading. A statement of the sales carried out over the southern counties by four auctioneers during the last three months of 1816 shows that thirty-eight meetings were held. The total value of the stock sold came to £1,157 7s. 4d., but for it only £584 18s. 6d. was received. Expenses amounted to £70 16s. 4d., and reduced the total income still further, so that Miller's receipts fell short of his expectations by more than 50 per cent. He had depended much on these transactions to retrieve his position, and his disappointment was correspondingly great. "Except at Haddington and Dunbar," he says, "where our sales were conducted with less expense, that method of disposal has been attended with expenses in proportion to the product far beyond what I could previously have had any conception of."

Nor was his other line of country business more

satisfactory. "Neither my home nor western circuits in the publication line," he says, "had done much for me of late." Inverness, from which he had great expectations, continued a comparatively unproductive field. Promises to the extent of £2,471 had indeed been obtained, but returns of actual cash were slow, in spite of the activities of his agents. Sales had been pushed by them into Caithness, and they had even adventurously crossed the Pentland Firth into Orkney in their search for subscribers.

Only in one direction had Miller some comfort. His friends in Dunbar and its neighbourhood rallied to his help in a quiet and unostentatious fashion. They sent more custom the way of his shop, so that he was able to say that "the retail part of my business, instead of falling off or suffering any diminution, seemed rather to have increased with my difficulties."

Miller made only one radical change in his arrangements to meet the new situation in which he found himself. Writing in September 1816, he said that "in order to have more of James's assistance here and our business more concentrated, I have it already in contemplation to bring down the printing establishment

from Haddington which will ease us of a deal of stock sunk in that quarter." That purpose he effected shortly afterwards by transferring the printing of all books to Dunbar, and leaving sufficient apparatus at Haddington under the charge of an efficient workman to execute what jobbing printing might still be required there. Dunbar had thus a press restored to it, and it retained it at least till the death of Miller's son William in 1838. Thereafter it appears to have been deprived for a time of the means of printing locally, until an incomer into the town supplied the want. "In this progressive age," wrote James Miller in 1859, "Dunbar can boast of two printing-presses. David Knox, of Duns, established one in 1849, and James Downie one in September 1855."

CHAPTER X

FURTHER ADVERSITY—AUTHORSHIP

BY March 1817, or six months after his settlement with his creditors, Miller discovered that it was impossible for him to carry out the bargain he had made with them. The trade depression had extended and become even more serious. Subscriptions were being raised in almost every town in Scotland to cope with the distress. Dunbar, like Edinburgh itself, had started relief works within the burgh. The people upon whom misfortune had thus fallen were, as Miller urged in a letter to his creditors, "those very classes upon whom I principally depended as purchasers." To continue his forced sales would be to court additional disaster, and he accordingly asked that the intervals between his instalments should be extended from six to nine months. The proposal was at once agreed to without hesitation.

Further Adversity

During the remainder of the year Miller persevered amid increasing difficulties. His auctioneers continued to send him depressing reports on their work, and the canvassing business remained a land of promise only. By the shipwreck of a Kirkwall packet he lost a parcel of books, and for a time was threatened with serious damage through having Cruden's "Concordance," which he was selling in conjunction with Gracie, removed from the list of books his canvassers could dispose of. Certain London booksellers had obtained an injunction against Gracie, and for a few weeks it looked as if the sale of the book would have to be abandoned, greatly to Miller's hurt. The injunction, however, "was afterwards taken off, by what means I shall not say, further than I would have had some 'compunctious visitings' before I could have adopted them." The only bright spot in Miller's dreary experience was the loyal aid he received from his two sons, William and James. They travelled the country in his interests, accepting a small weekly wage, for as James wrote, "I think 25s. a week as much as can reasonably be expected, circumstances considered, as no mechanic should have 30s. a week unless for travelling expenses."

A Futile Effort

A crisis was again reached in Miller's affairs at the beginning of 1818. In February he became convinced that it was impossible to implement the promises he had made, and he accordingly issued a statement to his creditors. He declared that he had done his best. He had had sales in every corner of the land where success appeared possible, and in prosecuting these "all the available members of my family have in one shape or other been occasionally employed in the business, and two of them are at this moment traversing the country as clerk to the sales." So great had been his exertions that his health had been impaired, and he stated that to continue the struggle longer in face of the protracted depression was impossible. He ended by suggesting that they should be satisfied with 14s. in the pound.

One or two creditors had become somewhat irritated by what appeared to them to be Miller's somewhat frequent "proposals," but in the end all were content to accept his offer. However much the majority may have sympathized with the debtor in his troubles, no other course seemed open to them. To have stripped him of his stock and sold him out would not have served

them better. In the depressed state of the book market the stock could have been disposed of only at a price that would have made the return much less than was offered by the plan he proposed.

Once more set free from his immediate embarrassments, Miller began work again with a will. He withdrew none of his agencies, and endeavoured to inspire all he employed with new zeal. "I must have had no sinecure of it," he said, "to wind up so many regulators and keep such a number of wheels in unceasing motion." "Indeed," he says in another place, "no general could have been more incessantly busied with his plans in the midst of his campaigns than I was with my routes, until the maps of the Scottish counties had become so familiar to my eye that, as I have expressed myself, I could almost chalk them out from memory."

Most of his hopes were centred in the north, and for a very short time it did seem as if the trade there was to aid him in retrieving his position. The country round Inverness as well as the long stretch that lay to the north of it was practically virgin soil for books of all sorts, and especially for those likely to be carried by

canvassers. Agents were continuously at work in Sutherland, Caithness, and the Orkneys. But the hope proved delusive. His chief agent in Inverness never seemed able to make good the promises he had held out of extensive profits from the north. The people of Caithness were quite willing to take books but were equally unwilling to pay for them. To add to the difficulties of the position, a London canvassing agency—the "Bungay"—opened operations within the district, and to the astonishment of all Gracie of Berwick also joined in the rivalry. Miller was furious at this latter development. In an angry letter he accused Gracie of treacherously taking advantage of the disclosure of his plans which he had made at his last settlement with his creditors. He had then indicated the splendid field he had expected Inverness to become, and Gracie had evidently made use of the information thus acquired to further his own interests. A personal interview was arranged between the rival traders, and Gracie succeeded in escaping from the awkward position by declaring that the business had been entered upon without his knowledge, and through the perversity of an agent. Miller allowed himself

to have his own thoughts on the explanation.

The Inverness agency having thus disappointed expectations, Miller determined to rid himself of it. His agent had just married a "lady of fortune," and for a time held out hopes of acquiring the business on his own account. To arrange the matter Miller journeyed to the northern capital in July, taking his son George with him to put in charge of the agency in case negotiations failed. His plans broke down on all sides. The agent could not be prevailed upon to take over the stock. George had one of his fits of perversity, and Miller was forced to place another man in charge with instructions to make the best of the situation.

Miller's last hope was gone. Calamity was added to calamity. A three months' illness laid him aside from duty. His wife, on whom devolved the management of the shop, also fell ill, and his son William, "the sheet-anchor of the auctioneering department," had to return home to take her place. Some of his agents proved less faithful than he had expected. By a shipwreck he lost a quantity of books which were on their way to Aberdeen to be sold. A

friend on whom he had greatly leaned for help intimated that he himself was in difficulties. To add to these troubles, the state of the country continued deplorable, and the winter, when most of his business should have been done, was slipping past while he himself was incapacitated.

There could be only one end to such a situation. Miller was again forced to call his creditors together. The meeting took place at the Royal Exchange Coffee House, Edinburgh, on April 14, 1819. The statement of his affairs showed a trade considerably reduced from what it had been three years before. His debts amounted to £6,100, while his nominal assets came on his own estimate to £6,253. The booksellers present, however, knew that in the depressed condition of the market the prices Miller anticipated for his stock could not be realized, and at last a composition of 8s. in the pound, payable at 6, 12, and 21 months, was accepted. The debtor was evidently much pleased with the result, for he wrote that "the matter may be said to have been adjusted fully up to my most ardent wishes and to the utmost extent of my most sanguine expectations."

However disappointing his failure had been the composition he had now effected with his creditors cleared his feet. "By being allowed more time to dispose of my stock I was better enabled to husband my resources by selecting the best auctioneers and the best times for auctions." The year 1820, accordingly, opened for him with a certain amount of brightness. While pushing his sales by the issue of catalogues both to the trade and to the public, he determined to curtail his canvassing business, which for some time had been confined to the north. The amount of actual loss incurred in this department was very great, for there were being constantly thrown on his hands incomplete copies of books which customers found themselves no longer able to accept. He accordingly withdrew his agent from Orkney and Caithness, leaving what business remained there to be finished on his behalf by local booksellers in Wick and Kirkwall. At the same time he gave orders that the agency in Inverness should be wound up as speedily as possible, a matter, however, which it took some months to accomplish. So successful were his whole endeavours that he was able to discharge his liabilities under the

last settlement at the appointed date, and he was accordingly set free from the pressure of business anxiety.

During the next eight years Miller's life flowed in more serene channels. Only one more venture did he make along unknown paths. He attempted to establish a connection in America, but the scheme speedily fell through, one remittance only being received from his agent there. He had private bereavement to meet, but he had sufficient leisure and ease of mind to be able to settle down and do some serious literary work on his own account. The object he had in view in these extra labours was undoubtedly not so much to achieve literary fame—though he afterwards thought that his exertions had given him a certain position as a popular author—as to relieve the strain of his financial difficulties. He had the satisfaction of knowing that his writings did in part have the effect he desired.

With the consent of the authoress he gathered together and edited the articles Mrs. Grant of Duthil had contributed to the *Cheap Magazine* under the title of the "History of an Irish Family," and in 1822 issued them in a volume under the same name. In his "Latter Struggles"

he distinctly names Mrs. Grant as the writer, but he chose a remarkable way of announcing her authorship in the book itself. Her name appears, not on the title-page, but as a footnote to a preface which deals mainly with Miller's own works. He, however, quotes the following interesting paragraph from the preface of her "Popular Models": "I shall not even insinuate that to the 'History of the Irish Family,' which appeared in the *Cheap Magazine* for 1814, I owe permission to inscribe my feeble efforts to His Royal Highness, the Prince Regent"—a somewhat remarkable dedication when the character of that same prince is remembered.

Miller had himself been his own chief contributor to the *Cheap Magazine* and the *Monthly Monitor*. Some of his articles had attracted the attention of men whose opinion was of some value, and he determined to put into more permanent form what had won their approbation. One series he published in 1821 and named "The Affecting History of Tom Bragwell." The purpose of the book was to prevent juvenile crime, and this he sought to do by setting forth the dreadful end of a young convict, and by insisting that all young people should be taught

to read good books. The means might be inadequate to the end in view, but Miller had no doubt that his plan would be efficacious if it received a fair trial. The writing is occasionally sensational, but the book is manifestly sincere, and Miller had the satisfaction of thinking that it had not only commended itself to religious teachers but that it had done something towards effecting the purpose for which it was written. "Since the appearance of 'Tom Bragwell,'" he says, "we have had fewer delinquents of this description on our criminal records"—though he modestly adds, "I take no particular merit in this; it may be perfectly accidental so far as my writings are concerned. But I mention facts as I find them, to whatsoever cause or combination of causes these facts may be imputed."

A curious circumstance is connected with the publication of this book. While Miller was preparing the revised matter before sending it to the press, he was annoyed "by the publication in London under a fictitious name of the very work with a very slight alteration." He entered into a correspondence with the publisher, which he describes as "unpleasant," but he soon became satisfied that the latter also had been victimized.

He had actually bought the book as a manuscript from some designing rogue!

The other book he published five years later in 1826. The draft of the work had been committed to paper as long ago as 1791. He tells that on January 25th of that year he "began to write the Book of Nature laid Open, or the Wisdom and Goodness of God in the Works of Creation Unfolded"—such was the original title—"and by the end of May following I had written or rather scrolled 627 pages 4to on this grand and sublime subject." Miller has no doubt about the precocity that he thus exhibited. "It will no doubt excite some surprise," he writes further, "to be informed that the original of a work that has got so many and so powerful recommendations emanated from the pen of, I may say, a self-taught youth in philosophical matters when he had just completed his twentieth year, and under circumstances that obliged him to sit up in the morning in the bed, making a desk of a folio volume of Stackhouse's 'History of the Bible' in order to complete his morning task of twelve pages, and sometimes to continue till rather a late hour at night in order that he might make out his evening oblation of eight pages more."

" Popular Philosophy "

Under the original title the book ran through the second volume of the *Cheap Magazine* in 1814. In volume form it showed considerable additions and rearrangement of matter, and appeared under the name of " Popular Philosophy." Although not drawn exactly on the lines of such books as Paley's " Natural Theology," published in 1802, Miller's book followed that well-known treatise afar off. It was a survey of all creation, with the object of deducing the existence of a Creator, and of finding some evidence of His wisdom and majesty. The book shows a wide range of reading, and if it does not prove its author to be an original observer, it at least indicates that he could put what he read in an attractive and popular form. It was dedicated to Dr. James Davidson, professor of Civil and Natural History in Aberdeen, to whose interest in it its republication was due, and who designated it a " very excellent and instructive treatise."

The preparation of " Popular Philosophy " for the press proved a pleasant task to Miller; he declared that the time he spent in getting it ready was " perhaps the most happy as well as the best employed period of my life." After its issue he had to complain that its sub-title, " The Book of

Nature," had been appropriated for a series of lectures on the same topic by a London writer, and that advertisements of this book followed his own in the Scottish newspapers. Inquiry convinced Miller that the device was merely one of those literary coincidences that occasionally vex the souls of authors. Miller also points out another coincidence. The original draft had been written during a period of great trade depression, and the work itself made its reappearance in a year notable for calamities in the book world. While it was passing through the press the great house of Constable collapsed. The want of money had a damaging effect on the sale of the book, but it had a cordial reception from the press. One compliment its publication brought him. The famous Church leader, Dr. Thomas Chalmers, called on him, and Miller tells how, on leaving him, "although I could give him no hope of being able to visit it [the coast] with the encumbrance of a gig, he took along with him that part of my work which described the Geological Alphabet and the other curiosities along the coast of the Cove shore, etc."

CHAPTER XI

CLOSING YEARS

MEANTIME the state of the country had not improved. Economic and political discontent had so spread that Lord Cockburn could write in 1822, "I rather think that we are tending to a revolution, steadily though slowly." In the same year the general condition of the people of East Lothian was made even worse by the failure of the East Lothian Bank, whose head office was in Dunbar, and whose affairs, as Sir Walter Scott ("Malachi Malagrowther") said, "had been very ill-conducted by a villainous manager." In April 1822 he absconded with a large sum of money and securities of great value, leaving the bank with £63,000 to meet liabilities of £120,000. The loss fell altogether on the shareholders, almost all of whom belonged to the neighbourhood of Dunbar, for "their correspondents in Edinburgh at once guaranteed the

payment of their notes, and saved the public even from momentary agitation and individually from the possibility of distress." [1] The immediate result, however, was a stringency in money. In the neighbourhood of Dunbar the population suffered diminution by several hundreds owing to the closing of a cotton factory at Belhaven. All these changes affected Miller in both sides of his business as a general merchant and as a bookseller.

The year 1826 proved to be a time of peculiar hardship and misfortune to all engaged in the book trade. During its course came the historic insolvency of the great publishing houses of Ballantyne and Constable. If these firms could not stand the strain, it was little wonder that Miller began again to feel the pressure of adversity.

[1] Miller was a heavy depositor with the bank at the time of the cashier's disappearance, but he does not appear to have suffered even temporary embarrassment from his flight. For the period from June 21, 1821, to April 1, 1822, that is, for eleven months before the catastrophe, Miller made no fewer than seventy deposits of money with the bank, the sum amounting to the large total of £3,652, which gives an indication of the extent of his business at the time. Nowhere in his autobiography does he hint that he lost anything by the failure.

In the following year Miller's difficulties were further increased by a step taken by his son William. William had been apprenticed to his father, and had spent all his life in his service. For a time he had been employed either at Dunbar or at Haddington as circumstances demanded. Of late years he had acted as an auctioneer, and had made extensive journeys, chiefly in the north of Scotland, on his father's behalf. Of all his sons, William seems to have been the only one who gave Miller the most unqualified satisfaction.

To lose his services, therefore, must have been a severe blow to the father, but he could no longer expect that any one would ally himself permanently to his fortunes. Many years before, John Walter of the *Times* had bewailed the injurious effect of his bankruptcy on the prospects of his family. "Judge," he said, "what must be my sensations: twenty-six years in the prime of life passed away; all the fortune I had acquired by a studious attention to business sunk by hasty strides, and the world to begin afresh, with the daily introduction to my view of a wife and six children unprovided for and dependent upon me for support. Feeling hearts may sympathize at

the relation, none but parents can conceive the anxiety of my mind in such a state of uncertainty and suspense." The language has a strange resemblance to that used by Miller on more than one occasion. His compositions with his creditors had frequently been further embittered by the fact that he himself was past the period of his youth, and that his children had not been provided for. Time, however, had now somewhat mitigated circumstances. James was acting for himself; John had succeeded to the business carried on by his former master; Robert, his delicate son, was employed in Edinburgh, where his only daughter Elizabeth was also in some "situation." William alone of the family, therefore, with the exception of the prodigal, had neither house nor home of his own.

Shortly after midsummer 1827 William set up in business for himself, and in August married Catherine Aitken of Falkirk. He took the premises on the other side of the street in which his father had begun more than thirty years before. Although engaged in the same branch of trade, there does not appear to have been the shadow of rivalry between the two. Indeed, several years after the separation, the father could write: "I

need scarcely add that he had, and must ever have, my best wishes that everything that is good may attend him, for the filial part he played on so many important and trying occasions while in my service, for which I trust he will suffer nothing in the estimation of his best friends and customers ; while the testimony of an approving conscience will be his everlasting and never-failing reward."

Whether the loss of William's service adversely affected his father's business or whether it merely hastened an inevitable catastrophe cannot be determined, but four months after his son's marriage Miller had to lay a statement of his affairs before his creditors. The meeting took place in Haddington on December 15, 1827. The interval of eight years had considerably reduced Miller's business. He gave in his debts as amounting to £3,067, and his assets to £1,270, and accounts for his failure by the depreciation of his stock, the trade depression of the times preventing subscribers completing their purchases, bad debts, and the heavy expense of carrying his goods to a suitable market. The situation, he says, would have been worse had it not been for the exertions of his wife behind the counter, and the profits

he had received from the sale of his "Popular Philosophy." The composition was a small one, but the creditors were sympathetic to the bankrupt in his misfortunes. "It was certainly a lamentable consideration," he wrote, "at our time of life to see again the fruits of other eight years and eight months' hard-earned earnings all swept away in the general wreck."

It is quite apparent that this last misfortune left Miller with a business very considerably diminished, and he made haste still further to reduce it. He began sales by which he sought to get rid of his heavy stock, even although he had thereby to sacrifice possible future profits. He was indeed a pathetic figure at the time. He had set himself from the beginning to develop a trade in books because he considered it most fitted to benefit the community in which he lived, and to use his grocery business merely as an aid to attain that end. Now he had to rely on the subordinate trade and allow the principal to slip from his grasp. To a man with his literary ambitions the trial must have been a severe one. To add to his misfortunes he had also to encounter family bereavement. After a long and lingering illness his son Robert died on August 12, 1828.

The only relief to the gloom was the celebration of his silver wedding, which took place on July 11th of the same year, and the encouragement of friends who aided him by increasing his retail trade.

For two years after his stoppage prospects brightened somewhat, and it looked as if his local trade were to provide Miller with a stable and respectable means of livelihood. His son William came to his help and a certain income was derived from an agency for two stage-coaches which started from his door. Success on a modest scale seemed to be reached, but again, and for the last time, financial disaster descended upon him almost without warning. His creditors met on January 5, 1832, when he surrendered even his household furniture to them. Again he met with cordial sympathy, but the blow was the hardest he had yet to bear. He made various attempts to recover his position, and was at last compelled to part with his private collection of books. "I next resolved to try to dispose of the greater part of the books of my private library. Old friends and well-cultivated acquaintances were some of them, but this was one of those imperious occasions when the oldest friends must part." Many

men have had to surrender on account of poverty collections which they have gathered together through laborious years. Miller's sacrifice may not have been so great, but he must nevertheless have felt his loss severely. He was full of conceits in the descriptions he gave of his life history. This time he described as the "winter of life," and the words were exceedingly appropriate.

All along Miller had been most methodical in keeping notes of events personal to himself. He retained to the last the juvenile essays he prepared when still a lad. At the beginning of each year he had been accustomed to write a retrospect of the preceding twelve months, and to moralize on its events. These he now sought to turn to account by writing what may be called his autobiography. He issued prospectuses for the work, and succeeded in gathering a sufficient number of subscribers to warrant him in publishing it. The book was intended to describe "a life passed in comparative obscurity, but replete with much striking vicissitude, and not without some occasional attempts to be useful. It will be delineated in such a way as cannot fail to interest the careful observer of the providential development of human events, to excite the sympathy of those

who admire the patient and persevering efforts of suffering humanity in the midst of misfortunes of an appalling nature, and surrounded by difficulties of no ordinary description, and to impress on all the instability and uncertainty of earthly comforts and human acquirements."

Miller was over sixty years of age when his "Latter Struggles" was published. It has been rightly described as a "singular piece of autobiography." It shows the lineaments of a man ambitious, resourceful, and upright, but for many years dogged by persistent misfortune. Among books the volume has certain peculiarities. Its title-page, which is matched only by its dedication, is abnormally long, putting to shame even some of the long-winded catalogue-titles of a couple of centuries earlier. Its printing is disfigured by an excessive use of the comma, which makes the reading of it somewhat of a trial to the patience. Its style is diffuse, and digressions that appear to have no valid defence are frequent. Names of persons and places are wrapped in an unnecessary mystery so that for those who are without a key the worth of the volume as a business record of a provincial bookseller is seriously diminished. It has its value as a chronicle of

the beginnings of the printing and bookselling industry in East Lothian as well as a description of the methods used in pushing the trade, but on the whole it is difficult to understand how the book ever succeeded in being printed without severe editing. In sending it out into the world, the author was no doubt influenced by the example of men in the same profession as himself. He does not mention Dunton, but he had read Lackington, and is careful to point out that his career closely resembled in many particulars that of William Hutton, the Birmingham bookseller, who had also published an autobiography.

Miller did not long survive the publication of his book. There is no evidence in it that he retired from business before the end. That he abandoned printing seems obvious. When his son James published his "History of Dunbar" in 1830 it was issued in Dunbar, not by his father, but by his brother William. Had Miller been still in the old way of business that was a book in whose imprint he would have been only too pleased to have had his name. During 1831, William was printing for the town council, and it is unlikely that he would have set up an opposition press if his father was still able to execute

such orders. That Miller had also abandoned bookselling seems certain from the fact that he himself prints a letter in 1833 in which he is described as "late bookseller in Dunbar." It is probable, therefore, that he had given up the struggle in which he had been so badly mauled and was now dependent entirely on the grocery side of his business.

Miller died on July 26, 1835, in the sixty-fourth year of his age. The wife of his son William had died four days before, and the entries of their burial stand together in the local register. It is noteworthy that the keeper of the record made a significant exception in the case of the deceased bookseller. Obeying the universal conviction that death makes all equal, the parish clerk has entered the names of the dead without adornment of any kind. Only occasionally has he added a note of special identification. Miller's name, however, has "Mr." prefixed to it, and there is added the description, "Author of several books." Perhaps no more eloquent and unconscious testimony could be given to the esteem in which he was held by his fellow-townsmen. No notice seems to have been taken of his death by the public prints. Ten days after his decease

an ordinary obituary advertisement appeared in the Edinburgh *Scotsman*. It designated him "late bookseller and printer," and added: "This simple notice is intended to give intimation to his extensive circle of friends and correspondents."

Miller played no part in public affairs. He was nine years in business before he took the trouble to qualify as a burgess of his native town, the ceremony taking place on October 2, 1800. In 1818 he was proposed as a member of the town council but was unsuccessful in obtaining a seat, his brother James being preferred before him. Another attempt to enter was made in 1821, but he failed a second time, and he never again tried to influence the corporate life of the community through its council. And yet he was a public character as no other man in the town was. If his fellow-townsmen had no use for his municipal services, he nevertheless carried the name of their burgh over broad Scotland.

There has not been a surplus of literary booksellers, and Miller takes an honourable place among the few. For a man who had for many years a business so widely spread and of so many departments, the extent of his personal acquirements is surprising. His reading was wide. A

certain leisure for the cultivation of his gifts was in part due to an injury in early life which prevented him serving behind the counter, and in part to the excellent qualifications of his wife who relieved him of the necessity. He speaks plainly about his own versatility, and evidently has no mean conception of his abilities. Deceived by the excessive praise of a few he came to consider himself as a popular author of considerable gifts and a man to whose writings the public owed not a little. But this was merely the harmless result of his own great exertions on their behalf. His style may be prolix and involved, but he made no pretence to mere literary excellence. He was essentially didactic in all his writings, and it would be affectation to suppose that they worked no good to the morals of the countryside. That he should have wielded an influence at all would have been reward enough in his eyes.

No one who reads the record of Miller's life can fail to be struck with its perseverance and industry, as well as by its misfortunes. He is, perhaps, sometimes disposed to pity himself, but few readers will be inclined to deny that his ingenuity and initiative deserved a better fate

than that he should be left practically a bankrupt in his old age. He laid much stress on the fact that the good and the benevolent were frequently great sufferers; and with a certain complacency ranked himself with them. Passages of the tenor of the following are not uncommon in his private writings: "It is no wonder that the good old patriarch Jacob expressed himself in the mournful and pathetic words, 'few and evil have the days of the years of my life been'; that Socrates, the most patient, as well as the most learned among ancient sages, had his Xantippe; that the virtuous Seneca was doomed to live and bleed to death in the time of Nero; and that the good John Howard, that prince of philanthropists, had a source of so much anxiety, vexation, and uneasiness within his own domestic circle. Indeed, nothing is more evident than that the pious and the good of all nations and ages have had their full share of the troubles and afflictions of this mortal state." There was more than a touch of superstition in his nature, and Miller occasionally made life somewhat difficult for himself by brooding on his dreams and other omens. He had, however, many real sorrows besides those of business cares, but through them all he kept a firm

face towards adversity and took its strokes with becoming grace. Of his personal integrity and uprightness, as well as of his deeply religious nature, there cannot be the shadow of a doubt.

The name of Miller continued to be represented in the book trade of Dunbar for some time longer. William Miller had a printing-press, but he never seems to have used it for anything beyond the ordinary jobbing of a provincial town. He was a man of some character although he had none of his father's push and initiative. That he attained to a position of some influence is shown by the fact that when a seat fell vacant in the town council, he was, on July 1, 1834, co-opted by the members as one of their number. At the next election in November 1835 he presented himself as a candidate to the electorate and was duly returned after a vote. Whatever career of usefulness might have been before him, however, was cut short by his death in July 1838. His business was then taken over by James Downie, whose descendants still carry it on in the same shop. Nothing seems to be known of the children he left behind him.

CHURCH OF ST. MARY, HADDINGTON.

JAMES MILLER

JAMES MILLER'S SHOP AND DWELLING-HOUSE, HADDINGTON.

CHAPTER XII

BIRTH AND APPRENTICESHIP

JAMES MILLER, the eldest son of George Miller, was born at Dunbar on December 21, 1791, and on Christmas Day thereafter was duly baptized. Like his father, he was educated at the local schools. While still a lad he showed signs of a literary bent, an inclination which was fostered no doubt by the aspirations of his father as well as by the bookish character of the business in which he was engaged. It is said that he "composed a tragedy while yet at school, and had it staged with the help of some of his companions, utilizing an empty garrett for the purpose." The suggestion for such a work would doubtless come from what was happening in the town, for small and provincial as Dunbar was, it could at the time boast the possession of a theatre.

It is also asserted that when his schooldays

were done, James was entered as an apprentice in the office of a local lawyer, who is usually identified with the town clerk of the day. It is said that his inclination was to continue in this profession, but at his father's wish he abandoned it to learn the business in which his life was spent. There does not seem to be any truth in the assertion. Before he was fourteen years of age, James was busy in his father's workshop. In December 1805 the latter notes the receipt of a letter from an old friend acknowledging the gift of a book bound by James and congratulating him "in bringing forward a son for his help." If in later years James indicated that he had been forced against his will into a business which he disliked, the statement may have been made by way of excuse for the irregular mode of his life at the time. In any case he was formally bound apprentice to his father as a printer, the period of his training to end on April 14, 1811.

The printing-press being at Haddington, James passed the greater part of his apprenticeship in that town. The conditions under which the business was conducted must have made his course very uncertain for several years. His father resided chiefly in Dunbar, and could not in

consequence give adequate personal supervision to what was being carried on in his name or even properly control the training of his son in morals and the mysteries of his craft. For a time, indeed, he was wholly dependent on him, a lad just entering his 'teens, for the guidance of the entire business. The father was not unaware of the responsibility he was thus throwing on the boy, but he seems to have had considerable confidence in his son's powers. A letter which he addressed to him early in 1805 is worth quoting in part. After telling him that he intended placing the charge of the grocery department upon another, and giving him practical control of the press, he says: "Much must depend now upon your conduct. You have entered into a confidential situation, and have at once to fulfil the duties of an apprentice and a servant, of an overseer and a son, and while you have reason to be daily learning, you have also reason to be exemplary to, as well as to look after, those that are taught. . . . In many things it may be necessary for me to tell you your duty as well as to instruct you wherein you are deficient. I must, therefore, earnestly request that in all things you will be pliable and obedient,

cheerful as well as active in performing your duty; and particularly that you attend to all my written orders and instructions. When I convey to you from time to time my sentiments in the form of a letter, I would advise you to preserve them all carefully, and copy them into a book at your leisure. They may convey some useful hints which may be of service to you in the world."

Under such circumstances it is not astonishing that during his apprenticeship James was a frequent cause of anxiety to his father. Once he ran off and was absent for some months during the winter of 1807. He went to Edinburgh, and his father made the best of a bad business by procuring him work in the office of Oliver & Boyd, with whose principals he was well acquainted. In his letter to Boyd offering James's services for a year, Miller said: "He is now pretty proficient in most of the laborious parts of the business and wishes to have some experience in the correcting department, the wareroom, and the counting-house." A bargain was struck, and James worked in the office of the firm for some months. His father was necessarily grieved at his conduct, both on the

lad's account and because it left the Haddington branch at a very critical period of its history for long intervals without the supervision of an interested person. Miller, however, was inclined to apologize for his son's actions. He felt they "proceeded more from the impulse of the moment, and that thoughtless love of change so incident to many a good man at his time of life, than from any other cause." The real reason for his behaviour, however, was to be found in the lad's situation at Haddington. He was left too much to himself. In the printing-house he had to deal almost single-handed with unruly apprentices and with workmen who were his trade superiors, and had besides to reside in a house where his father only occasionally bore him company.

James came back to Haddington at the beginning of June 1808 and resumed his work. "He certainly had good reason to congratulate himself," said his father, "upon his return to such a promising situation, for our weekly statements had for some time been very encouraging." His sojourn in the capital seems to have sobered him effectively, for thereafter his father had no cause to complain of his conduct. He willingly

fell in with a suggestion that he should learn bookbinding in view of his ultimately settling in business for himself in Haddington. "The binding business," he wrote to his father, "must certainly be a desirable attainment for any printer to have some knowledge of; but more particularly to those who are destined for a country situation, as in such a place the one business is imperfect without its sister." Part of his time accordingly was thereafter spent in Dunbar.

According to his bond James's apprenticeship ended in April 1811, and when that date arrived his father at once proposed to set him free to determine his future for himself. His son's response to the suggestion must have been extremely gratifying to him. "Although I have now passed through the time necessary for the ordinary purposes of my profession," he wrote, in a letter dated April 20, 1811, "I could not harbour the idea of leaving you so soon to prosecute my own ends, just after obtaining a little knowledge of your business. This would be in the highest degree culpable and inexcusable. No! for although in the middle stage of my apprenticeship, circumstances and dissatisfaction conspiring, might make me draw back a little,

this was more the result of youthful pride and folly than any unwillingness to serve you. . . . And though your good sense may have now overlooked this misconduct, I would fain make retribution for this glaring error in my youthful life while it is yet in my power. As an apprentice I am bound at least to serve out the time absent from my calling; as a son to add a twelvemonth more to my apprenticeship. I therefore hope you will be pleased to let me continue in your employ as such till May 24, 1812." At the same time he expressed a desire to spend some months in travelling after this period of extra service was over. The letter closed with words which must have been a solace to a man, one of whose family was even then not doing well: "Should either I or any of the junior part of your family turn out useless members of society, we cannot plead bad example our excuse. Trained up to early habits of industry and piety, we have my mother and you for our pattern. Indefatigable and persevering in your respective spheres, we see you with admiration." Read in the light of subsequent events, this last sentence could not have been unwelcome to the father when he transcribed the words in 1833.

The father agreed only in part to his son's proposals. He had no desire to tie him down to any engagement, and readily consented to his seeing something of the world. In accordance therefore with their understanding, James prepared to leave Haddington. Early in January he made application to the famous printing firm of Ballantyne to be allowed to visit their works. Permission was obtained and a few weeks were spent at their presses. James's object, however, was, as stated in the letter already quoted, "to get into some of the first printing-houses in London, particularly those in which fine work, magazines, and newspapers are conducted"—an indication that even then the projects of the *Cheap Magazine* was forming in the minds of father and son. Armed with letters of introduction to several well-known firms, James set out for London about the middle of February.

The traveller was away for three months, and during that time he visited, among other places, Newcastle, York, Cambridge, Oxford, and London. No details are available about the printing-offices he inspected, but there is every reason to believe that he made diligent use of his opportunities. His father records that the journey

was accomplished "much to my satisfaction and in a manner that did so much credit to himself both in his operations and in his descriptions." This short *wanderjahr* brought James's period of tutelage and probation to a close. By the end of May he was settled in Haddington in full charge of the East Lothian Press.

CHAPTER XIII

PARTNERSHIP WITH FATHER—IN BUSINESS FOR HIMSELF—MARRIAGE

THE term of years for which George Miller had taken his first Haddington shops expired at Whit-Sunday, 1812, and a new tenancy of the premises was not entered into. Complaint had been made of carelessness on the part of the Town Council, to whom the property belonged, in putting it timeously in a habitable state, and Miller had retired from it at the first opportunity. New premises were taken at the foot of the High Street on a seventeen years' lease, and to these the press was transferred, and there remained as long as the Millers worked it. The new shop had been occupied for a year before young Miller took over the charge of the business, which continued to be carried on in its two departments.

But this was not the only change made in the status of the business. The elder Miller

now entered into partnership with his son, and the name of the firm appears for the first time as "George Miller & Son" in the prospectuses issued in connection with the projected publication of the *Cheap Magazine*. In that journal James had his share, although the burden of the work fell on his father. "I was well supported," the elder man says, "and admirably assisted in the printing, book-keeping, and travelling department by my son James, who assisted me also occasionally in my editorial capacity, and contributed some beautiful original effusions to the work." It seems impossible to identify those verses now.

In spite of his former protestations of loyalty to his father, James was somewhat restive during the next two years. He does not appear to have approved of the continuance of the grocery business, and various proposals were made to modify the relations between him and his father. In answer to a communication from his son, Miller wrote from Dunbar under date May 6, 1814: "As it is impossible for me to do much justice to the business here and have my attention much engaged with another concern, and, as divested of the grocery, the Haddington business, although it

may be made to do for one, cannot be supposed to do much for two, I therefore think that it will be as well, as you proposed before, to continue as we are to the New Year, or rather to allow time to get the Magazine concern wound up . . . till Whit-Sunday, 1815, when if you approve of it you may prosecute the business at Haddington in such a way as you may think fit on your own account."

That some arrangement required to be made was evident. Miller's niece, who had had charge of the grocery department, had left his service to start business on her own account. She had been helped to do so by capital she had obtained from her uncle, a loan which caused him great embarrassment when he himself needed money, for, at the crisis that came upon his own affairs, he was told that it was irretrievably lost to him. James had thus thrown upon him the charge of work that was thoroughly distasteful to him, for he desired to have nothing to do with what he called the use of the "scales." The possibilities of the situation between father and son were shown by the fact that when binding a new apprentice in September 1814 they drew the indenture in such a way that the lad might have to serve the firm of

George Miller & Son or James Miller alone according as the partnership was continued or not.

In December James made up his mind that it would not be needful for him to withdraw from Haddington, but his dissatisfaction continued. While on a journey to London he wrote in such a way to his father that the latter was grievously offended. "It showed me the misery," he wrote, "of depending on the good offices of one's own family, and strengthened my resolution of our coming to an immediate understanding as to how we were to be situated in respect to each other, and other matters in our new arrangements, on his arrival home."

A settlement was come to on May 16, 1815, which the father records included the following matters. The firm's name was to be retained so far as the printing department was concerned; each agreed to sink the same amount of capital in the business; the son was to be free to pursue the book and stationery branch, and in addition could add what other commodities he liked to his sale list. The grocery business was to be abandoned, and whatever the father was to do in that line was to be confined to Dunbar. "So

much in earnest was I not to intrude in these respects," wrote George Miller to his son, "that I gave him distinctly to understand that were I in G—— and my old friend Mr. P. to give me an order for a certain article in the grocery line, I would assuredly send it, but would recommend him to you for stationery, notwithstanding our long dealings and the many well-paid accounts I have had from him."

This settlement was largely due to the fact that the father had now definitely taken up the canvassing business. He had counted on the co-operation of James in this new departure. He thought the arrangements he had made would, he wrote, "be more agreeable to him as the line in which I had now embarked so largely would give him full employment for his types and labour at home, without so much trouble in travelling as he had been accustomed to of late in collecting occasionally so many small sums as we had now scattered about all over the country, and sometimes in such inclement seasons as to have his progress interrupted by snow or other storms." In the risks of this canvassing business, however, James was to have no part. He was to have his share in the profits

which the extra work was to bring to the printing-office, but there his responsibility and interest were to end.

The financial catastrophe that overtook George Miller in September 1816 did much to make the new arrangement of little service to James. He had come to his father's help in raising money, which he did by again taking long journeys into the surrounding districts to obtain payment of small accounts. The disaster was also followed by a material change in the printing business. It was determined again to remove the chief presses to Dunbar and there produce all books the firm might have occasion to print. James was essential to this work, and he accordingly took up his residence in the coast town.

By this time James had arrived at an age when he might reasonably be expected to make some provision for his own future. In 1818 he was in his twenty-seventh year, and from the way his father's affairs were shaping it seemed unlikely that he could do much for himself if he continued in his employment or in partnership with him. His father acknowledged that his reverses had involved all his family, and that it would be well if James commenced business on his own account.

After much consideration and correspondence this result was reached at the beginning of 1819, when the latter took over the Haddington printing-office, which was thenceforth worked in James's name alone. In spite of former prejudices against combining a grocery department with a printing, he also at the same time opened business in that direction: he had evidently been taught by the experiences of the past two years. The nature of his trade, apart from his presses, may be gathered from his advertisements. He was ready to supply stationery, "books in every department of literature," "groceries of all kinds," "spirits, foreign and British," and was willing to act as agent in procuring "any of the London and Edinburgh periodicals, furnished at the Edinburgh prices."

About the time young Miller took over the Haddington business he married. The name of his wife was Janet Crow or Craw, and she is said to have been a native of the neighbouring parish of Garvald. The records of the parish are so defective that it is now impossible to recover the exact date of the ceremony. At least one son and three daughters were born of the union. To the great grief of the parents, as well as of the grandfather, the son died in July 1823. George Miller

prints in full an ode which the child's father composed on the sad event. The opening verse runs :—

> Child of my love ! why hast thou laid
> Thy gentle head beneath the willow ?
> Thy Father's arms was warmer bed,
> Thy Mother's breast a softer pillow.

The career of the eldest daughter was not creditable, and so far as known no descendants of the family now remain. The date of Mrs. Miller's death has not been discovered, but it is unlikely she was alive when her husband's fortune and character broke down.

The press which passed into James's possession in 1819 produced some very creditable work. In a short time George Miller gave up doing elaborate work at the Dunbar office, and the Haddington workshop again became known as the East Lothian Press. It is remarkable that although it was employed in printing books written by the elder Miller, the younger sent his compositions to be set up in Edinburgh. It was largely employed by the Haddington Town Council, by local tradesmen for advertising purposes, and by local societies for the printing of their annual

reports. Several shop bills and public advertisements, for example, which were printed for Samuel Smiles, a general merchant in the town and the father of the well-known Dr. Smiles of "Self-Help" fame, are still extant."

Local pamphleteers and poets found the East Lothian Press very serviceable. One of the natives of Haddington whose literary labours deserve better acknowledgment was the Rev. Hew Scott, D.D., author of the erudite and useful "Fasti Ecclesiæ Scoticanæ." His father died while he was still a youth and left the family penniless. To support them and to provide himself with the means of attending the university, Hew Scott opened a little shop in the town. When he could he served behind the counter or hawked stationery from door to door. In 1811, while Miller was still an apprentice, the office printed a volume of local poetry to his order, and this he added to his wares. A similar collection by another local versifier was published by Miller himself in 1821.

The arrangement by which James began business for himself was somewhat delayed because father and son felt that an edition of Brown's "Bible Dictionary," then in hand, should

be finished before any change was made. This was in 1818, and in the preceding year Brown's son Samuel had set up his system of East Lothian Itinerating, Juvenile, and Village Libraries, which George Miller had denounced in such unmeasured terms. James had no scruple, however, in printing the literature the scheme needed, and his name appears on the quaint "Hints to Readers" which Brown affixed to every volume lent out.

The history of the East Lothian Press during these years is an epitome of the civic, commercial, and literary activities of the burgh. Unfortunately many of the products of the press have disappeared beyond hope of recovery, and the domestic records of the town must consequently to that extent remain defective. Literary printers have not been common, and it is the peculiar distinction of the East Lothian Press not only that it provided the mechanical means for the printing the locality needed, but that its management was for so long in the hands of one whose literary abilities were so extensively recognized. James Miller remained in charge till about 1833.

CHAPTER XIV

POET AND HISTORIAN

THAT James Miller should have had a poetic gift and should have exercised it is in the circumstances not very astonishing. His father had a strong "itch for scribbling," and his compositions occasionally took the form of verse. To judge from the examples that remain, his muse barely succeeded in rising from the ground. His son's was destined to higher flights.

The earliest examples of James's verse that found their way into print probably appeared in the *Cheap Magazine* and the *Monitor*. He did not, however, often seek the aid of the periodical press in giving his rhymes to the public. A first draft of one of his poems was printed in the *Scots Magazine* for 1817, and twenty years later another appeared in a literary magazine issued by his uncle and cousin in Dunfermline. In 1822 George Tait, a Haddington bookseller, made a

Front View.

View from South-East.

DUNBAR COLLEGIATE CHURCH (NOW DEMOLISHED).

(*From James Miller's "History of Dunbar."*)

To face p. 203.

valiant attempt to establish a literary journal for his own town. Jane Welsh Carlyle was asked for help with it, and in a letter of date March 3rd makes merry over the proposal. The projector called on her, and, as she wrote, she "proceeded to exercise all her powers of argument in trying to convince this candidate for literary fame that it would be more advisable for the hitherto latent genius of Haddington to distribute itself among the various periodical works in the metropolis, when, if not admired, the strength of others would sustain their weakness and they might hope to pass unobserved, instead of, by uniting in a body, rendering darkness visible." But in spite of her scepticism *The East Lothian Magazine* was actually issued and ran through a year. It was a project in which Miller could not fail to be interested, even although the journal was to be published by a rival bookseller, nor could those who were making the attempt afford to overlook the help that he might be able to give them. They succeeded in including him in their list, and he contributed two poems to the new venture under the signature of the initial of his surname.

The first poem to appear in book form was "Verses in Memory of Dunbar Collegiate Church,"

which was published in 1819. The poem was occasioned by the rebuilding of the parish church and contains many references to its history and to the events that were associated with the district.

> Nor be thy pulpit dignities forgot,
> Tho' differing in their creeds, one common lot
> Awaits them now before their awful judge.
> I see them rise, in sacerdotal robes,
> With meditative eye "that loves the ground."
> First sage Dunbar, of Moray's noble house,
> Deck'd in his gaudy Romish garb appears,
> Avowedly zealous. . . .

He speaks of his own connection with the building :—

> How changed, since in the sunny morn of life
> I sat amidst these dear-remembered pews,
> Nor thought the service long. The Roman youth
> Hung not with more delight when Cicero spoke,
> Than I have listened to the holy man.[1]

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[1] Patrick Carfrae, D.D., ordained to the parish of Morham, Haddingtonshire, in 1766, and translated to Dunbar in August 1795. He retired in 1820 and died eighteen months later. "He was distinguished as one of the most eloquent and accomplished preachers of his day, notwithstanding that from reading his sermons, he was in his younger years, when the practice was uncommon, termed by the vulgar 'Paper Pate.'" Scott's "Fasti Eccles. Scot." I. 370.

Returning to these scenes, but late I saw
A crowd of stranger-faces worship there,
And I was left alone. Where have ye fled
Ye dear companions of those pleasant days
When hope was young like you, fair as the blooms
Before the winter wind has sear'd their bud :—
Ye rosy-cheeked host, where have ye fled?

He refers in passing to the grave of a sister who had died in infancy :—

. . . And I have wished
That we had made our pilgrimage together,
Then had I 'scaped a world of guile and woe,
And fallen like her upon the lap of heaven,
Pure as a snowdrop on a virgin's breast.

—a sentiment which is not infrequent in his books. The poem is preceded and followed by numerous antiquarian notes—a feature of all Miller's rhymes, whether long or short. With that literary economy which characterized both him and his father, the prose was afterwards incorporated in his "History of Dunbar."

In 1820 Miller followed with a more ambitious poem, "The Luckless Drave," or, as it afterwards was named, "The Lost Drave."[1] It is founded on a minute of July 27, 1712, in the

[1] "Drave = drove—a shoal of fish."—Jamieson.

Kirk Session records of Dunbar. There an account is given of how on that date the minister was engaged ordaining elders, and in the course of the proceedings read from a minute by one of his predecessors regarding the fearful doom that overtook some Sabbath-breakers. It was to this effect : " Mr. Simpson, minister at Dalkeith, son to Mr. Andrew Simpson, minister at Dumbar, in his exposition of the xxxii Psalm, hath these words : 'A fearfull judgement of God fell furth at Dumbar, about the year of God 1577, Qrof I was an eye-witness. My father, Mr. Andrew Simpson, of good memory, being minister thereof, Qho, going to the church, saw a thousand boatts setting their netts on the Sabbath. He weeped, and feared that God would not suffer such contempt. It being a most calm day as ever was seen at that season ;—at midnight, when they went furth to draw their netts, the wind arose so fearfully, that it drowned Eight Score and Ten Boatts, so that there was reckoned in the coast side fourteen score of widdows.'" In the popular imagination the disaster was due to witchcraft, and Miller took these two aspects of the story as the setting for his poem.

A Storm

The poem contains some vigorous lines :—

That morning's calm was like the meteor's glare,
That dazzles to destroy its wareless victim ;
For when the boatmen, at night's lonely hour,
Return'd to draw their nets, loud roar'd the gale,
As if from Greenland's cold unfathomed caves,
Winter had come with all his host of storms.
The seaman's face turn'd pale, as boats on boats
Rush'd fearfully o'er yawning vortices ;
While, like a monster, lash'd the sea around,
Now gorging and next vomiting its prey,
And shoals of scally fry, sheer upward thrown,
Came down like sheeted hail upon the decks !
Prows split on prows,—the splinter'd oars were slipt ;
And shiver'd sails flew from the shatter'd masts
In dread confusion, as when horror stalks
Amid the thunder of the British line.

" The Luckless Drave " attracted the attention of Sir Walter Scott, although it exhibits the usual defects of Miller's verse—exaggerated metaphors, an occasional unfortunate use of words, and haltings in rhythm. In the original edition he incorporated a song by another hand without specifically stating the authorship. When the poem was reissued in 1824 the song was cut out.

Emboldened by the success that attended these ventures in verse, Miller resolved to make appeal

to a wider audience. Accordingly in 1824 he gathered together what he had already published, and, adding several compositions of greater importance, issued the whole under the title of "St. Baldred of the Bass, The Siege of Berwick, with other Poems and Ballads." Almost everything in the book was founded on local legends, and consequently the volume was bound to have a very limited circle of admirers. It is quite evident that the writer considered it his best work, for in all subsequent publications that bore his name he carefully describes himself as its author. Its circulation could not have been as great as Miller expected; as late as 1865 it could be obtained unbound and in the original sheets from a local bookseller who held the stock.

"St. Baldred of the Bass," that gives title to the volume, is perhaps Miller's most sustained effort, and contains several passages of considerable merit. The story is of that legendary saint who made his solitary cell within sight of the Bass Rock, and the contention for whose body by three different parishes was happily settled on the morning of the burial by the discovery of three separate corpses of the departed.

FRONTISPIECE TO "ST. BALDRED OF THE BASS."

To face p. 208.

They raised the sheet from Baldred's face,
They turn'd the corpses where they lay,
In each his features clearly trace,
Crown'd with a tuft of silvery grey.
They deem his bright ethereal flame,
Which mortal form could not control,
From heav'n had held a trio frame
To suit his zealous warmth of soul;
That he might stray in paynim lands
A pilgrim lone in Palestine;
Now tread the desert's burning sands—
Now preach the faith by Pictish Tyne;
With that sweet angel for his guide,
Who led St. Serf by Bosphorus' strand,
Attendant duteous by his side,
Like earth and heaven hand and hand!

Miller revels in the description of the gathering crowds, the solemn processions, and the angry discussions. A tender note is occasionally heard, as in the "First Requiem":—

I.

Be hallow'd the place of thy rest,
O soft be thy bed in the tomb!
Thou'rt gone to the land of the blest,
With the souls of the happy to roam:
As planets in loveliness roll,
And light the lone wanderer's way,
Thou beamed on the night of the soul,
And left us at dawning of day.

II.

With bay we'll embroider that stone,
That tells us of glory and thee!
While the changes of seasons roll on,
Thy memory unfading shall be.
Though fled on the seraphim's wing,
And left us in darkness to mourn,
With earliest blossoms of spring
We duly will garland thy urn.

—a passage which is characteristic of many in the poet, for grammar has not always its due from him, nor is the thought always sustained to the close.

"The Siege of Berwick" goes back to the reign of Edward III for its subject, and takes as proved that monarch's treacherous slaughter of a Scottish hostage. The play contains several vigorous scenes, as that in which Lady Seton urges her hesitating husband to sacrifice their sons rather than surrender the town to the besiegers:—

LADY SETON.

Bear yourself like a man, and comfort me,
For I had need of it. The cunning Edward
Must not betray us thus. What boots his word?
Remember thy brave brother Christopher,
Who was betray'd, beheaded, like his friend
The glorious Wallace! If they gave themselves
Martyrs for Scotland, oh! shall we refuse

Our sons, who both are young, and Heaven will sure
Reward our sacrifice with plants as fair
As those we're doom'd to lose,—if plants as fair
May be.

SETON.

O might I perish in their stead!
But Heaven requite the tyrant's broken faith—
Kings promise, are absolved, and die reputed
For what would damn the meanest wretch that lives.

LADY SETON.

And would ye take the tyrant at his word,
And render town and castle, fame and honour,
To be the victim of credulity,
And afterwards derided as a traitor?
Rather than homage thus Plantagenet,
Had I a thousand lives I'd lose them all;
Rather bear children daily for an age,
Than buy their lives at such a doubtful price.

The play preserves the unities and shows that Miller had made diligent study of good models. The diction is sometimes stilted, but there is a rough eloquence scattered over the pages. The chief value of the whole book, however, now lies in the notes.

In subsequent years Miller published several booklets of verse, most of which took the shape of personal tributes to public men connected with the county. In this way he issued in 1836 "Verses to Lord Ramsay" on his marriage to

Lady Susan Hay. Parliament was dissolved in 1837 on the accession of Queen Victoria, and two candidates appeared for the representation of the Haddington group of burghs. The election took place in July and the Whigs carried the seat by a majority of thirty-one on a poll of 505. Somewhat to compensate the defeated candidate, Sir Thomas Buchan Hepburn of Smeaton, Miller addressed certain verses to him. The field was a suitable one for his talent. He had the opportunity of voicing his political opinions and of delving into the family history of his hero. He is lavish in his epithets, and it must be confessed that the exuberance of his metaphors leads him into mixing them. He declares :—

> No upsprung mushroom from its fungus bed,
> Shall lead the men for whom great heroes bled,
> The Hays and Hepburns of the days of yore,
> Who Scotland's lion still triumphant bore ;
> These still shall guide fair Lothian's gallant sons
> While rural Tyne o'er fertile meadows runs.

In the same vein he describes the adversary :—

> Like baubles floating in the sunny ray
> They shine awhile, and live their little day ;
> Expand, like wasps, their rainbow glittering wings
> That serve to shade the venom of their stings !

His polemic is sometimes fierce, and the generality of his accusations alone prevented them from becoming legally libellous. In his later years elegy made a strong appeal to Miller, and several of his longer poems have the decease of prominent men of East Lothian as their subject.

As a poet Miller drew his inspiration mainly from Sir Walter Scott, the form of whose verse he imitated closely. His love of abundant notes was suggested by those that accompanied the Wizard's poems. Like Sir Walter he had stored his mind with local traditions and family history, and his lines frequently contain felicitous references drawn from these sources. In the mere mechanical part of his art, Miller was not always perfect. He had little regard for the accent of words if the number of syllables in them spaced out his line. His range was limited. He had little or no lyrical gift, and what excellence he possessed lay in his powers of narrative and description. More than once the poet's love for the fair county in which he lived breaks out, and then his verse is not only robust but melodious.

> O Lothian! much I love thy sunny vales,
> Where Ceres leads improvement in her train;

Where agriculture's choicest skill prevails,
Exalts the peasant and adorns the thane.

. . . . .

O Lothian ! much I love thy eastern shore,
Where boyhood mark'd the elemental war,
Beyond the mighty Bass, sublimely hoar,
Amidst the rocky caverns of Dunbar ;
And oft by Preston's venerable fane,
I musing court the solitary scene,
Where scarce distinguish'd rest the mingled dead,
And lowly swains with lordlings make their bed !

But much as he courted the muse, few of his lines cling to the memory, and he wrote nothing which took a permanent hold on the public. He was well aware of the literary celebrity achieved by certain indwellers within the county, and with perhaps an unspoken desire to be numbered among them by some future bard, sang their praise. Robert Blair had been minister of Athelstaneford, in which charge he had been followed by Home, the much persecuted author of the famous "Douglas." Robertson, the historian, had occupied the pulpit of Gladsmuir, and he claims kinship with them all.

Anon the muse, borne on the ambient air,
Spreads her broad pinions o'er the "Grave" of Blair ;
By grey Kilduff with Elibank she strays,
The shade of Home by magic touch to raise ;

Now weeps the tragic drama's sad decay,
While pantomime usurps the histrionic bay,
And hails the immortal priests, who with the fire
Of Shakespeare thrill'd the form-creating lyre:
Or fond of pastoral ease and rural charms,
Skims with the buskin'd maid our cultured farms,
And circling flies to settle by Lochill
To spy the young enthusiast at the plough;
To hold deep vigils with the shade of Mylne,
And bind the holly on the poet's brow.
Thence soars by Gladsmuir's shades, where Robertson,
With his loved Plutarch, sat reclin'd at ease;
While history's page like a bright mirror shone,
Taught by his art to edify and please.

With all his effort, however, Miller cannot be reckoned even among the best of the Scottish minor poets.

In 1830 he followed up his ventures in poetry with a history of his native town. An octavo of nearly 300 pages, it was printed by its author in Haddington, and published in Dunbar by his brother William. The prospectus which preceded its appearance said that "as the high prices of books on antiquarian subjects places them beyond the pale of ordinary readers, there is still a vacuum in regard to the minutiæ of Scottish history, which these provincial descriptions, mixed up with details of a light and amusing nature, alone can supply. There is also much of a civil

and domestic nature which has lived its day and been forgotten, that has acquired an importance from the lapse of time; and there are not a few incidents of a more recent date, connected with the history of the town, which are worthy of being rescued from oblivion."

Judged by this standard and by the time when the book was written, Miller's performance may be considered on the whole a creditable piece of work. It has certainly obvious defects. Its references to original authorities are meagre, and the author seems to have made little use of the stores of information that were lying to his hands in the town's records. He sometimes passes over a century without recording anything concerning the progress and development of the burgh, although stirring events were taking place at the time throughout the country. On many subjects the narrative is of the slightest. But the book shows considerable enthusiasm for historical work, and it was a step towards a larger enterprise he already had in hand. Many facts that came under his own notice and that would otherwise have been lost are preserved. A second edition, considerably enlarged and brought down to date, was published in 1859 by James Downie, Dunbar,

who by that time had restarted the printing business carried on by the Millers.

Reviews of the book were not numerous. A favourable notice appeared in the *Edinburgh Literary Journal*, a periodical that had a wide reputation for the wisdom and culture of its staff. It said that the work "indicated considerable research and ability," and that Miller had "executed his task in a manner that reflects credit upon himself, and which cannot fail to make his name respected and esteemed throughout all East Lothian." One fault alone was found. The critic disputed the author's estimate of Queen Mary. The summary of Scottish history that Miller had perforce occasionally to introduce, he said, "appears to be accurate in all respects, except in the view it gives of the character of Queen Mary, which seems to us in the highest degree erroneous and unjust," a judgment which is sufficiently explained when it is recalled that the editor of the *Journal* was that fervent partisan of the Scottish Queen, Henry Glassford Bell.

CHAPTER XV

TOWN COUNCILLOR—DOWNFALL

UP to 1883 the method of electing the civic councils of the royal burghs in Scotland was a somewhat extraordinary one. In effect each town council had the power to elect its successor, and in practice this meant that the retiring councillors re-elected themselves, or when a vacancy occurred added to their numbers a man of like mind with themselves. The possibilities of abuse and corruption in such a system are obvious, but it was a privilege that those in power carefully guarded and defended in every way. An agitation carried on with more or less activity for half a century was required before legislation put an end to the anomaly.

Haddington is a royal burgh, and before the passing of the Burgh Reform Act its Council consisted of twenty-five members, sixteen of whom sat as merchant-councillors and the rest as

deacons of the various trade incorporations in the town. The only qualification for a seat was that candidates should be burgesses of the town.[1] Exercising the powers they then held, the magistrates and merchant-councillors met on October 14, 1825, and according to the minute, "elected and chose and hereby elect and choose Archibald Dunlop, Distiller; Thomas Howden, Surgeon; James Fairbairn, Cloth Merchant; and James Miller, Bookseller, to be merchant-councillors of this Burgh for the year to come and until they be removed off the Council." On the following day Miller with the others attended and took the prescribed oath of allegiance. Such an election, unanimously made, gives some indication of the esteem in which Miller was at this time held in the community. The other newly co-opted members were men of substance and position in the town. The name of Dr. Howden is still held in considerable repute.

A small burgh like that of Haddington had not many positions of service to which its individual

[1] In order to have the privilege of trading within the burgh, George Miller had been admitted to the roll on September 22, 1804, on making the usual payment. In virtue of being a son of a burgess James also had his name placed on the roll in 1813 at the reduced fee applicable.

civic rulers could be called. At an early meeting Miller was chosen to serve on the important committee that dealt with the "stent" (the local rates), and the town's accounts. A year after, he was elected one of five to form a committee on the Town's Library—a duty for which he had manifest qualifications and which gave him the opportunity of doing a useful bit of work.

The Library referred to cannot be neglected by Scottish bibliographers. It was gifted about 1717 to his native town by the Rev. James Gray, who had been minister at Aberlady, a parish adjoining that of Haddington. At the time of the gift the same generous donor mortified a sum of 3,000 merks Scots, equivalent to about £167 sterling, for charitable purposes, 25 of which were to be devoted to the upkeep of the Library. At present it consists of about 1,400 volumes, published both at home and abroad, many of which are of great interest and value. The Town Council committee evidently went into the affairs of the library with some care, for they presented a report which the council considered of such value that they ordered it to be engrossed in their minutes, an instruction which a negligent town clerk unfortunately failed to implement. Part of the

committee's recommendation evidently was that a catalogue should be prepared. The work was entrusted to Miller, who no doubt carried it out *con amore*. In 1828 he duly printed and published the list. It runs to 80 pages, and though it contains some mistakes in the towns to which the printing of certain books is assigned and is arranged on the absurd plan of giving complete alphabets to the various sizes, it is nevertheless a competent piece of work. Two hundred copies of the catalogue were printed, but only one is now known to exist. It was rescued from an Edinburgh bookseller's recent catalogue and appropriately presented to the Library by the finder in July 1911.

For two years Miller's attendance at the Town Council meetings showed praiseworthy zeal, but after October 1827 his attitude towards his civic duties changed. In that month he was one of two voted on for the important post of Burgh Treasurer, an office, it may be stated, that carried with it only a very nominal salary, but he lost the election. In October 1828 he was named one of a leet of two for the magistracy, but when the election day came he was not even proposed. In October of the following year three magistrates

were required; four were nominated for the vacancies, of whom Miller was one, but again he was passed over. These repeated rebuffs were too much for him, and after the third repulse he ceased attendance at the Council. It was customary to "purge" the council roll at stated intervals, but there is no record that Miller's name was formally removed. He was allowed quietly to drop out. The last meeting at which he was present was that held on October 13, 1829.

What was the cause of this pointed setting aside of Miller's claim to civic honours, and why did he show such evident chagrin at the treatment he had received? It is to be feared that the reason was one personal to himself. Town Councils are frequently not very scrupulous about the private character of the men placed in the magistrates' chair, but it is probable that Miller's conduct was the stumbling-block. He was already showing signs of that moral collapse which ultimately made him an outcast from all respectable society. On the very day on which the Council met to elect magistrates in 1828, his father was in Haddington and showed a strange restlessness. "I cannot easily forget," he says, "the melancholy walk I had on the afternoon of the 14th of

October when I left Haddington to go round by the Abbey in order to make some inquiries respecting a certain matter in regard to which I felt at this time a good deal of anxiety." He does not give the reason for his anxiety, but it was sufficiently explained by what was taking place in the civic chambers.[1]

There is evidence also that Miller's business in Haddington was breaking up, and that did not arise from lack of work. Already two printers had found sufficient encouragement to start presses

[1] It should, however, be stated that Miller presented the Town Council with a bill in connection with the library which might well have caused friction. It contains the names of books supplied whose price runs up to seven or ten guineas for three and sometimes one volume. Though a member of the committee Miller charged for his services. The personal items were :—" Four weeks arranging Library with assistant, £8 8s. ; Two days copying pamphlets and one day altering library to fill the new press, 15s. ; Postage to London respecting library books, carriage, and expense in going to Edinburgh on the same occasion, 14s." Miller's total account came to £83 7s. 3d. The whole bill presented to the Council was for £123 5s. 10d., and all the authorities had to show for the expenditure was a catalogue, about a dozen books, and some joiner work. In ordinary circumstances the cost might not have been serious, but at the time the town was in financial difficulties. Miller's account was paid by bill and if any discussion arose over it the Council minutes give no hint of the fact.

in the town. During 1830 Miller's printing transactions with the Town Council numbered four, each for a paltry sum. On March 2, 1832, he was paid for his last order from them. Thereafter his rival, John Wood, who described himself as "printer, bookseller, bookbinder, and stationer," produced some prints for the Council, but in December of the same year George Neill, a firm which in a few months appeared as "George Neill & Sons," became what may be termed the town's official printer, and so continued for years. Miller's name is never thereafter appended to any print. If anything further were needed to indicate what was happening it is to be found in the following fact. In 1832–3–4 James Miller's name appears on the Roll of Registered Voters in the town of Haddington under the designation of "printer" and as tenant of a shop and dwelling-house in High Street. On September 8, 1835, it again appears, but this time in the list of those who had been struck off the roll at their own desire. Miller had lost not only his business but his home. In view of his subsequent life, there is only one explanation that apparently covers all the facts.

Various causes have been currently given for

Miller's downfall. He was admitted a member of St. John Kilwinning Lodge of Freemasons at Haddington on May 12, 1815, and it has been suggested that the convivialities of that brotherhood sapped his self-control. There is no foundation for the suggestion. As their minutes show, he was not often at their meetings, and no record that he ever held office can be discovered. When "St. Baldred of the Bass" was published, notice was taken of the fact. In the minute of November 30, 1824, it is described as "a poem of considerable merit," and it is recorded that the health of its author was drunk. In the book itself there is a "Masonic Song, written and sung" when the portrait of one of its worthies was hung on the walls of the lodge. But that seems to include the round of his intimate connection with the fraternity.

It has also been said that Miller traced the first step of his downfall to his sale of a book that created a storm of criticism among the orthodox. This was "A Rational Investigation of the Principles of Natural Philosophy," by John Howdon, a farmer near the town of Haddington, and brother of the local practitioner, who had joined the Town Council with Miller. The

book was a violent attack on revelation and a denunciation of the Bible in particular. There can be no doubt of the indignation its appearance caused in the community. The first volume was printed by John Grieve and published by George Tait, both of Haddington. When the second was ready they evidently shrank from the task of placing it on the market, for when it appeared a year after it bore no publisher's name, and had for imprint merely the words: "London: Printed for the Booksellers." Remorse for having helped to circulate such a volume cannot have produced so great an upheaval of conscience or been followed by such dreadful consequences to Miller himself that he was driven to quench his horror in the wine-cup. The date forbids, for the "Investigation" was published in 1832 and 1833 when Miller's habit was already formed.[1]

The real cause was the poet's own inclination and the unusual facilities that then existed for satisfying any craving for intoxicants. Many of the

[1] If Miller had any feelings of the kind ascribed to him it is unlikely that he would have celebrated Howdon in his "Elegiac verses in Memory of . . . Worthies of East Lothian" (1841), and there spoken of him as being "the author of an ingenious Essay on Mechanical Philosophy,"

writers of the Statistical Accounts of Haddingtonshire call attention to the excessive number of licences that were held in their parishes, and to the degrading influence they exerted on the community. The compiler of the Dunbar survey says: "This is a sore evil which has long been complained of and it appears to be increasing." The town of Haddington was in fact surrounded with parish ministers whose cry was the same. If Miller was inclined to self-indulgence the way was made very easy for him. And if these were not enough he had the tempter near him at all times. "It was unfortunate for Miller," says his biographer, "that his business was not exclusively a book and stationery one, as the grocery with which it was combined, with its usual concomitants, put an insinuating and seductive enemy near his hand." It was apparently to clear himself of any complicity in his son's downfall that in 1833, when the final catastrophe was near at hand, Miller's father printed the extract from a letter which he had received from him twenty years before and which has been already quoted.

After his business came to an end in Haddington, Miller seems to have remained in

the town for a time. He would find no difficulty in procuring employment, for he was a journeyman printer, and the office that succeeded to his business would give him a helping hand. The dedication of the "Shipwreck of the Czar" is dated from Haddington in February 1835. Not long after this, however, he drifted to Edinburgh. There also he would be sure of work, for the city was full of printing houses. He dates the dedications of the three volumes of verse which he published in 1836, 1837, and 1841, from Edinburgh in May, September, and May of these years respectively. Two of them were printed by Miller himself. One bears the name of no special printing office, but the other came from that of A. Turnbull & Co. in the High Street, where Miller must therefore have worked. Soon after the last date he returned to Haddington, and seems to have been engaged in the printing and publishing house of James Allan. He went into lodgings, and a certain greengrocer is named as his landlady.

CHAPTER XVI

"LAMP OF LOTHIAN"—DEATH

ENCOURAGED by the promised reception to be given to his "History of Dunbar," Miller began planning a similar volume dealing with the county town even before the first work was off his hands. The soil was virtually virgin, for at that time, and even since, the county has been singularly unproductive of books connected with its local interests. Only one contribution of any importance had been made towards the history of the town, and even that was fragmentary and meagre. Miller's own description of it is that "it was drawn up by the Rev. Dr. Barclay, one of the ministers of the parish, and communicated to the Society of Scottish Antiquaries in 1785. This article possesses great merit, and is treated in a more systematic manner than the generality of the statistical details; but notwithstanding the research it displays, a vast fund of information

regarding the ancient affairs of the burgh has escaped the author's notice." It was to remedy this defect that Miller undertook the work.

It is evident from the various "Proposals" issued from time to time that the author intended to publish his book early in the "thirties." The first prospectus was sent out in 1830, and subscribers were then asked for. In 1833 the promise was made that the book should be ready early in the following year. Miller, however, had by this time begun his downward career and had probably left Haddington for Edinburgh. It was not till 1844 that the volume was actually issued to the public.

During these years the plan of the book underwent considerable modification. It was at first proposed to publish it as a duodecimo at 4s. 6d. "done up in cloth." A subsequent "Proposal" stated that it was to appear as a "post octavo uniform with the Waverley Novels, price 7s. 6d. in cloth boards." When the book actually appeared from the press it turned out to be an octavo, price 8s. 6d. The earliest prospectus gave no indication of authorship unless it could be gathered from the fact that the book was to be "uniform with the 'History of Dunbar.'" It

was also announced to include " several particulars regarding the county at large, which may very properly be introduced along with the history of the shire-town." The subsequent advertisement amplified the contents considerably. " The work," it said, " will be embellished with engravings, 5 inches by 3½, representing the principal Noblemen and Gentlemen's Seats, Picturesque Ruins, Public Buildings, etc., from Drawings taken expressly for this publication." An account of agricultural progress within the county during the preceding sixty years, the fishing history of the River Tyne, as well as biographical notices of eminent and notorious natives, were to be included. The whole book was not to be the product of one pen, for the prospective publishers, at that time George Neill & Sons, had in view the co-operation of others in the work. The chief part, however, was assigned to Miller, for it was announced that the " Historical Part and Antiquities " were to be by him.

In the end the book was issued from the press of James Allan, Haddington, with much of the promised matter omitted. Only one illustration was to be found within the

boards—a woodcut of the ancient Abbey church of St. Mary's, Haddington, which appears on the title-page. The entire authorship of the book is assigned to James Miller.

It is generally acknowledged that Miller's book is on the whole a sound bit of work. Its chief title is the "Lamp of Lothian," and some criticism might be offered as to the appropriateness of such a name. One critic has remarked that "Miller applies the term to the magnificent parish church of St. Mary. The writer of the 'Chronicle,' who originated the epithet, applies it most distinctly to the church of the Franciscans or Grey Friars." The critic himself blunders in ascribing the phrase to Fordun, but it may be questioned whether a book devoted to the general history of a whole community should bear a name which was popularly applied to the choir of a single church within it. No one, however, can deny that the title has a certain distinction, and its picturesqueness may be considered its sufficient justification. The accuracy of the contents is on the whole wonderful when it is remembered that its author had no special training in scholarship. Minor errors have been pointed out, but these do not invalidate the general trustworthiness of the

book. As a local history it probably errs on the side of introducing rather much detail concerning the general history of Scotland, but for the audience it was meant to reach that cannot be considered a deadly fault. Mr. A. J. Balfour says that "all dwellers in East Lothian are permanently indebted" to it.

The germ of the book is to be found in the notes which for some years Miller wrote and published as a supplement to his "Haddington Register." This latter publication was begun in 1820, and contained the usual tabulated information to be found in county almanacs. In the issue for 1825 he added to it the first of the supplements, naming it "A Chronological Account of East Lothian from the Earliest Records to the Present Period." Under varying names, and with no strict chronological sequence, Miller continued the issue of these notes up to the appearance of his "History," and even after he himself had lost control of the "Register." Altogether seventeen parts were published, many of them bearing no indication that Miller was their compiler. It has already been said that he had no special training for historical inquiry: he was specially defective in his ability to read the

ancient script in which many of the documents on which he had to depend were written. He had, however, an efficient friend in Dr. David Laing, the eminent antiquary, and in the issue for 1829 Miller made due acknowledgment of his debt to him. "The publisher," he wrote, "must here state his obligations to Dr. David Laing, of Edinburgh, a gentleman whose skill in our early bibliography has often been noticed, for favouring him with the substance of the following extracts. The books are written in the Old English character, which when negligently executed is almost impossible to transcribe."

Only one further circumstance needs to be added in connection with the production of the "Lamp of Lothian": it was set up in its entirety by its author. "In this connection," says Mr. Thomas Cowan, who at one time worked alongside of Miller, "Mr. Allan [the publisher of the book] could tell how that, one day, as he was waiting till a proof came back from a writer's office in town, he chanced to see a piece of the MS. of the 'Lamp' on the case where Miller had just left setting. Thinking to do a good turn, he followed the 'copy' and set up several lines to give Miller a friendly help.

On the author's return there was an explosion, and all the types kindly set up for him he threw back into their places in the case : no human fingers save his own must touch the sacred work." As an example of typographic skill the book can stand on its own merits. Being published by subscription the edition was limited, and a curious fate overtook the sheets that remained unsold. They lay unbound "cumbering the printer's shelves for a number of years. Seeing the hopelessness of their ever being wanted, or the futility of attempting to get up any fresh demand for the work, the printer parted with the total remainder of the sheets for a small slump sum to get rid of them as waste paper. The purchaser was a tobacconist in town," who used them as wrapping-paper. The passage of time, however, showed the value of the book, and copies could afterwards be obtained only at an enhanced price.

The "History" was subsequently reprinted in the columns of the *Haddingtonshire Advertiser*, and from the type so set a volume in double columns was published in 1900 with prefatory matter. Certain liberties were taken with the text by way of omitting parts and inserting footnotes in the body of the book, and in consequence

the original edition, which the reprint considerably reduced in market value, retains its superiority.

It has been currently reported that Miller received some civic distinctions over the publication of his "History." It is said that he was awarded a special vote of thanks from the gratified city fathers, and that he was entertained to a banquet. A moving picture is drawn of the author's overwhelmed confusion when he rose to reply to the laudations that were heaped upon him. But these appear to be mere rumours. If such marks of honour were bestowed the town records contain no reference to them.

Miller was fifty-three years of age when the "Lamp of Lothian" appeared, and he had more than twenty years still to live. His days of credit and renown, however, were past, and it is needless to enter on the story of these closing years in any detail. In sadness they could hardly be surpassed. The fatal appetite he had encouraged at length completely mastered him, and he became a homeless waif roaming the countryside, sheltering where he could, and picking up a precarious livelihood as opportunity offered. He was not long in earning the contempt of those who saw him periodically, wandering erratically

here and there, a wastrel and beggar. Numerous stories are told of him which show that to the last he carried some consciousness with him of the estate he had forfeited and the depths to which he had fallen. Even in his degradation he resented patronage from any one, and many a savage retort escaped his lips if benefactors presumed too far on his need. One of his chief sources of income came from prints of his own poems which in single sheets he hawked over the countryside. The bibliography which follows notes some of these and indicates the subjects he chose. No wedding or other public or domestic event was allowed to pass without its tribute of verse, and he made special poetic capital out of the annual training of the local militia. James Maitland Balfour of Whittingehame, father of the ex-Prime Minister, was Major-Commandant of the East Lothian and Berwickshire Yeomanry Cavalry. He was a man highly esteemed in the county, and when he died in 1857 Miller penned a "Monody" on the event: it begins:—

Among the blooming groves of Whittingham,
  Where through the haughs the gentle streamlet strays,
The fragrant flowers were breathing summer's balm,
  The tuneful linnets chanting hymns of praise.

I met a Minstrel there, with harp unstrung,
He leant against an oak, opprest with care,
A gloom of sorrow o'er his features hung,
His soul was sad, though nature's face was fair.

Alas! (he cried). The 'Squire of yonder towers,
Fallen in his prime, lies lone in Funchal's isle,
Shedding a veil of sorrow o'er these bowers,
Which bloom'd so fair 'neath Lady Blanche's smile.

The remaining three verses degenerate into mere doggerel.

Such occasional poems he added to his stock by having them printed in Dunbar or Haddington, retailing them on his rounds at a penny each. Gratified recipients of his honours never grudged half a crown to the needy poet.

As another specimen of this occasional verse the following poem, which had a certain vogue, may be given :—

BONNY DUNBAR.

Town of the Ocean! the fresh breeze is blowing
That wafts me again to thee, bonny Dunbar,
Where youth with its smiles and its roses was glowing
Beneath the bright halo of life's morning star.
Delighted I hail thee, with fondest devotion,
My dear native town, by the blue-rolling ocean.
A thousand glad wishes my heart wakes in motion
Again to behold thee, my bonny Dunbar.

ANNUAL LYRIC

ON THE EAST LOTHIAN AND BERWICKSHIRE YEOMANRY CAVALRY

GOING INTO QUARTERS AT DUNBAR, JULY 1855-56;

WITH A MONODY ON THE LATE

JAMES MAITLAND BALFOUR, ESQ. OF WHITTINGHAM, MAJOR-COMMANDANT,

INSCRIBED TO THE RIGHT HON. THE EARL OF HADDINGTON, K. T.,

ONE OF THE SURVIVING OFFICERS OF THE ORIGINAL REGIMENT,

By JAMES MILLER,

AUTHOR OF "ST. BALDRED OF THE BASS;" "HISTORY OF HADDINGTON," "DUNBAR," &c.

HEADING OF BROADSIDE BY JAMES MILLER.

To face p. 338.

" Bonny Dunbar "

Tho' low lies thy castle, a vet'ran forsaken,
  Yet princes have found thee a buckler in war;
When the bravest of England at Bannock were shaken
  Their prince fled for refuge to bonny Dunbar.
Now on thy lone ramparts the wild bird is screaming,
And mouldered that wall where the banner was streaming,
While shades of the mighty at midnight are beaming
  To weep o'er the heroes that fought for Dunbar.

O fair as the rosebud that bathes in the morning,
  And pure as the hearts that are formed for the sky,
Thy daughters in beauty thy walks are adorning;
  In sweet native lustre they charm the fond eye.
Thy sons are the foremost in peril and danger,
They plunge through the billow to save the lost stranger,
And when freedom calls, they'll most bravely avenge her,
  Or nevermore return to bonny Dunbar.

O where are the playmates that shar'd in my pastime?
  Far, far, now ye wander the wide world o'er,
Some shine in the zenith where fortune has placed them,
  While others are wrecked on a far foreign shore.
But oft ye'll remember, in youth gladly sporting,
How sped the sweet hours unknown to misfortune,
And vainly ye'll seek while ambition you're courting,
  For moments like those ye have spent in Dunbar.

As is to be expected, variants occur in the manuscript copies that exist. A print of the ode was recently made by an admirer.

As Miller grew older and consequently less able to care for himself, he created considerable

difficulty to the parish authorities under whose guardianship he more than once came. His reckless life laid him open to exposure in all kinds of weather, and sometimes he became so ill that he had to resort to them to be nursed. In this way he had to be helped by the inspectors of poor of Tranent, Haddington, and Dunbar. Once he reached Dunbar severely mauled from a conflict he had had with a fellow vagrant. So unsettled were his habits that he latterly never remained long enough in any one place to acquire a legal "settlement," and when he finally succumbed the parishes of Dunbar and Haddington had to threaten each other with the law courts before a compromise was reached and responsibility for him divided between them.

Considerable capital has been made of alleged kindness extended to Miller by certain county magnates, but it is difficult to discover in what way their benevolence showed itself. They have been credited with providing for his last days, but public documents leave no doubt that he was indebted solely to the public taxpayer, working through the parish authorities, for what comfort he enjoyed during the concluding twelvemonth of his life. Three years before his death an applica-

tion was indeed made on his behalf to the Royal Literary Fund, and a grant of £20 was voted for his use. But this is the only trace that can be found of anything done for him. Those who acted on his behalf on that occasion evidently stated the danger of handing over such a sum to the uncontrolled keeping of Miller, and it was given to the factor of the Earl of Haddington to disburse in the manner best fitted to aid the poet. The money was judiciously applied, though the almoner had frequently to endure the insolence of the man he was helping.

At length Miller's exhausted frame gave out. He had passed his seventy-third birthday, and it is wonderful that he had so long survived the rough life he had lived. He made application to the parish of Haddington for relief, and was by them sent to the Edinburgh Home of Refuge—an institution that had been opened in 1832 for such homeless and destitute persons as Miller. He was admitted on May 7, 1864, and died there on May 21, 1865. No one seems to know where he is buried or where the vagrant at last rests from his wanderings.

A fortnight after the death of its burgh historian the local paper had a sympathetic notice of

his life. "For many years past," said the writer, who evidently was well acquainted with Miller, "the shrivelled-up and wasted form of the old poet might be seen at any part of the highway between Edinburgh and the eastern part of the county—points that appeared to bound his horizon—feebly urging his steps along, uncertain where his next meal was to be had or where he was to lay his wearied limbs in repose at nightfall. Summer's sun and winter's cold were alike to him, and to many it is a marvel that the vital force did not rapidly succumb to such a strain. All efforts at doing anything to reclaim the wanderer to settled habits were in vain. . . . In his life and still more in his death we have another illustration of the 'calamities of authors'; but in poor Miller's case the illustration is accompanied with the sad reflection that he was himself the author of those which overtook him. He was himself his own nemesis." With which words all is said that need be said by way of moral and summary.

THE MILLERS OF DUNFERMLINE

JOHN MILLER, DUNFERMLINE.

After a water colour by Henry Gilbert.

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CHAPTER XVII

JOHN MILLER—EARLY YEARS—BEGINS BUSINESS IN DUNFERMLINE—AUTHOR

JOHN MILLER was born at Dunbar on September 4, 1780, his mother, Mary Deans, surviving his birth by a few hours only. His father died when he was nine years of age and he was therefore brought up by his half-brothers. On the marriage of George, to whose care he had been specially committed by his father, he went to reside with him.

On October 10, 1794, when he was fourteen years of age, he was apprenticed to his guardian, the indenture to last for four years. He had shown a desire for one of the learned professions, but his brother overruled his wish on the ground that he had been delicate as a boy, and that "we were more likely to apportion his labours to his strength and capacity, besides having him more under our own eyes and charge." Miller had some

fear that in thus binding to himself one who lived under his roof he might be accused of exploiting his services for his own behoof alone. The idea never seems to have entered the younger man's head, but to place everything above suspicion, Miller summoned John's relations on the mother's side and had the indenture signed on their behalf and in their presence.

During his apprenticeship John had to do entirely with the book and printing department of his brother's business. When his time expired, he was engaged as a journeyman, and for a year or two took charge of the printing as well as acted as clerk at the various country sales conducted by his brother. He was given ample opportunity for perfecting himself in his profession. In this way he saw something of the printing offices of Edinburgh and London, and in the latter place acted as agent for George with the booksellers.

Arrived at the age of twenty-four John determined to set up in business for himself. For a year he took charge of George's interests when the latter transferred his press to Haddington, but at Whit-Sunday, 1805, he left his brother's service for the last time, the two parting in mutual goodwill and esteem. Several months were consumed

MRS. JOHN MILLER, DUNFERMLINE.

After a water colour by Henry Gilbert.

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in selecting a suitable town in which to begin operations. Selkirk and Linlithgow were in turn considered, but in the end Dunfermline was chosen as holding out the best hopes of success. It had no regular bookseller, and its only printer was one whose activities do not appear to have been extensive.

Business was begun on September 4, 1805. "The 4th of September is a remarkable era in my life," he wrote George. "On that day I came into the world. On that day I lost my mother, and on that day I intend to open shop—another remarkable occurrence still may take place on that day." If in this last clause he referred to his marriage, he had to anticipate the date by several months, for he was united to Helen Laing, of the parish of Salton, in Haddingtonshire, on June 16, 1806.[1]

The capital necessary for this start seems to

[1] The children of the marriage were: 1. Robert, who died in infancy. 2. Mary (1808–1890), who married Alexander Lyle, son of Peter Lyle, bookbinder in Dalkeith, an intimate friend of George Miller of Dunbar. Alexander Lyle was first a factor on a Fifeshire estate, and afterwards a merchant in Leith. Messrs P. and D. Lyle still carry on a bookselling and printing business in Dalkeith, and are the owners and publishers of the *Dalkeith Advertiser*. 3. John Laing (see Chapter XVIII).

have been provided out of the money left him by his father. On the latter's death in 1789, a daughter by his first marriage made immediate claim to her legal share in spite of the fact that her father had already bestowed upon her a handsome wedding portion. The brothers submitted all their claims to two mutually chosen arbiters, with whose award each expressed satisfaction. In the absence of the document itself,[1] it would appear that John, being the youngest and least able to care for himself, was generously dealt with by the brothers. As long as he resided with George the money was not touched, and the whole of it was accordingly available when he came to set up in business for himself. Whenever the final arrangements for his departure were completed, George insisted that John should examine the arbiters' award, which he had not as yet seen. After he had done so, he acknowledged that he had been most handsomely used.

Contrary to his brother's advice, John determined to engage in the book trade alone. His first shop was at the corner of Abbey Park Place,

[1] The Burgh Court Book of Dunbar, in which the decreet arbitral was recorded, appears to have gone amissing, like so many other public documents belonging to the town.

and overlooked the ancient abbey grounds. Its situation was not of the best for a bookseller, and Miller likened himself to "a candle placed under a bushel." As a parting gift, and as "the most valuable if not the most lasting memorial of his regard," George had presented him with a printing-press. It was ordered in the autumn of 1805, but owing to the cantankerous conduct of the person through whom the purchase was made, the press did not reach Dunfermline till June 1808, three years late. Miller, however, was in no way concerned about its non-arrival, for at the beginning he had "no prospect of being able to use it soon."

A local Dunfermline historian describes the machine when it did arrive as "a large Dutch printing-press for carrying on the printing business in all its branches." By December following it was in full working order, and Miller was able to inform his brother that "the printing business is still thriving and I am about to reap some of the fruits of my labours." He is first stated to have printed for the city fathers on February 14, 1809, when an account rendered by him "for printing Advts. and for a copy of Hutchison's 'Justice of Peace,'" amounting to £3 16s., was paid.

Begins Business in Dunfermline

The change in Miller's place of residence came to have considerable effect upon his religious views. While in Dunbar he had been attached first to the Seceders and then to the Established Church, but after being in Dunfermline for four years he became an ardent Baptist. Like many who have had to revise their creed he showed a violent partisanship for the new faith. Writing to his brother announcing his change of views, he said, "I do not hesitate to say that infant sprinkling is one of the grossest corruptions ever introduced into Christianity," and at the same time tried to involve his correspondent in a controversy over the matter. To such a challenge George was peculiarly susceptible, but business cares prevented him taking it up, and the problem was left undiscussed between them. In a small town like Dunfermline this change would have its effects upon Miller's business, but if he had any sacrifice to make he bore it willingly and won the respect of the whole community. When he died it was said of him that he had been "a consistent member of the Baptist Church, and maintained a walk becoming his profession."

After establishing the first private circulating library in Dunfermline in his first shop Miller

SHOP AND DWELLING-HOUSE OF THE MILLERS, DUNFERMLINE.

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removed to Bridge Street, where he took possession of the tenement immediately to the west of the present Town Hall. Here the business was carried on till it ceased in 1866. The shop was on the level of the street and the dwelling-house in the story above. The printing-press was set up in the flat below the shop, entrance being found by a side stair. In an imprint of 1815 the address appears as the "Printing Office, opposite the Townhouse."

In that same year Miller appears prominently in the poetical preface of one of his own publications, "The Proceedings of the Craw Court." He is depicted loudly demanding a preface for the little pamphlet—which, however, the author refuses.

> "A book I never saw
> Without a Preface." [I cried "Pshaw."]
> "'Twould be like meat without a grace,
> Or what is worse, a noseless face;
> Besides I want a page or so
> To fill up a blank leaf, you know.
> Come on—fall to't—the boy is waiting.
>
> . . . .
>
> A page or two will soon be made;
> Don't eat the cow and leave the tail."
> But all he said could not avail.

The first book known to have been printed by

Miller was "A Short Account of the Laws and Institutions of Moses," by Henry Fergus, one of the ministers of Dunfermline. It appeared in 1810, and its size, extending to 134 pages, showed that his printing-office must have had considerable resources. The "Account" was not written with a view to separate publication, but was intended to be part of a larger work on the "History of the Hebrews." That it was not produced in full was no fault of the printer, but of the author, who changed his mind. A beginning having thus been made, the Miller press was a very busy one for the next half-century. Books, pamphlets, chap-books, broadsides, and periodicals poured from it. For most of the time Miller was the principal, and sometimes the only, printer in the town.[1]

As long as George Miller of Dunbar lived, the brothers kept on the most friendly terms. Their businesses were distinct, but they had some professional dealings. John did little or nothing to carry his trade by travellers or can-

[1] There is a tradition in the family that Sir Noel Paton served for a time in Miller's printing house. That the families were acquainted is shown by the portrait of Mrs. John L. Miller, reproduced in this volume.

vassers into the country round Dunfermline, and George was therefore free to pursue his sales there. But he did so very sparingly. There is no record that he worked Fifeshire till many years after John had settled within it. On the other hand John was always ready to forward his brother's projects. He took charge of the county on behalf of the *Cheap Magazine* and succeeded in procuring no fewer than 2,400 subscribers. Many of the products of the Dunfermline press also were manifestly suggested by those of its contemporary at Dunbar. Thus there were "Cheap Tracts" published from both towns, one of those appearing in Dunfermline being an abbreviated issue of George Miller's "Tom Bragwell." At various times certain periodical ventures, which were issued from John's press, took on the colour and shape of the *Cheap Magazine*. The name of the one brother frequently appeared on the title-pages of the other's books as agent for their sale. This interchange extended even to the woodcut blocks, several of which were used as illustrations in books issued from both presses.

In still another way John is said to have followed his brother's example—that of authorship. Henderson in his "Annals of Dunfermline" credits

him with the composition of "an excellent little book" of 36 pages, 16mo, published in 1812—a "Religious Catechism, with Forms of Prayer. For the use of Children"—and of the "seventy-eight very excellent hymns," published in 1814, entitled "Sacred Poetry for Children, on the Greatness, Wisdom, and Goodness of God as manifested in the Works of Creation, Providence, and Redemption." A later book, Stewart's "Reminiscences of Dunfermline," published in 1886, says that he was "author of many small volumes," but these ascriptions of authorship require corroboration.

In 1835 Miller introduced one of his sons into the business, and thereafter the name of the firm became "John Miller & Son." Miller himself died on Wednesday, March 24, 1852. His wife had been removed a year before and the old man never recovered from the blow. His last days were somewhat of a burden and had entirely disqualified him for transacting business. A local appreciation of his career stated that "he never took a very prominent place in public matters, but always sustained a most respectable position in society."

JOHN LAING MILLER, DUNFERMLINE.

After a painting, artist unknown.

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CHAPTER XVIII

JOHN LAING MILLER—HIS VERSATILITY—FAILURE

NO change took place in the designation of the firm when John Miller died, although the sole partner now became John Laing Miller. He was born on December 11, 1811, and was the second son and third child of his parents. At school he had often been ranked as *semper assiduus* in the rector's roll of honour, and had been trained in his father's shop. On October 5, 1841, he married Jane Moncrieff, daughter of the Rev. James Blair, who was at that time pastor of the Baptist congregation in the town, and whose biography was afterwards written under the title of "The Scottish Evangelist." By her he had a numerous family.

John Laing Miller was a man of versatile parts. Like his father he was a Baptist and took an absorbing interest in the denomination. In 1841

the local congregation, which was known as the Scottish Baptists, split into two, and Miller was one of the leaders of the party that seceded and formed an English Baptist congregation. From the start of the new congregation to the time he left Dunfermline, a period of twenty-five years, he acted as its secretary, Sabbath School superintendent, and leader of praise, all gratuitously.

All his life Miller had a passion for music, and gave public exhibitions on the "seraphine," the precursor of the harmonium, and a novelty at the time. Largely through his advocacy an instrument was introduced into the public worship of his congregation, a matter then somewhat difficult to achieve on Scottish soil. For six years he managed the concerts of the local Harmonists' Society, to the no small benefit of the community. It is noteworthy that in the year he joined his father in business the firm published the "Melodian : a Selection of Songs, Duetts, and Glees," in two parts.

Young Miller had also a scientific bent. It is said that he delivered his first lecture on electricity along with Dr. Ebenezer Henderson, the writer of the "Annals of Dunfermline," when he was only fifteen years of age. For sixteen years he was

secretary of the local Scientific Institute, and carried through the arrangements for an annual series of lectures. He made many experiments with tricycles, and he and his family were frequently to be seen on them long before they became popular throughout the country.

Among young people he was a great favourite, and did much good work for them. His interest in them is reflected in the list of children's publications issued by him and his father. His faculty for entertainment in song, recitation, and experiment made him everywhere a welcome visitor to their gatherings. These activities were the probable origin of a series of books that dealt with this side of work among children, notably of "The Reciter's Own," which appeared in several parts and ran to three editions. Miller could also string rhymes together—an accomplishment which was shared by his wife[1]—and together they set nursery jingles to illustrations printed from blocks they had purchased for the purpose. These booklets were issued hand-coloured by his own children.

Before the formal addition of the son's name to

[1] A more serious example of Mrs. Miller's powers of composition is to be found in the "Spiritual Lyre," London, 1870, "She died in beauty."

that of the firm, the father had issued several periodicals. These included the usual local almanacs, one of which appeared annually from 1829. More in the ordinary style was the *Gasometer, or Dunfermline Magazine*, a monthly literary magazine of the usual amateur type, which was edited by young Miller.[1] It was published throughout 1831, and was followed next year by *The Monthly Scrap Book*, a journal of the same kind. In 1835 the firm began the *Monthly Advertiser*, which at first was issued gratis and contained advertisements only. In 1840 literary matter was added and one penny per copy was charged. It ultimately became known as the *Dunfermline Advertiser*, and ended its career in 1863. A rival journal had introduced a steam press, and Miller's paper with its old-fashioned hand press could not stand the competition. The *Advertiser*, however, may be considered Dunfermline's first newspaper, for its predecessors, two in number, did not reach beyond a few issues. There is no doubt

[1] A review of the magazine, which appeared in an Edinburgh journal, said that "as cheap publications, conducted on pure principles, as we are sure this will be from the respectable character of the publisher, [it] cannot be too much multiplied."

MRS. JOHN LAING MILLER, DUNFERMLINE.

After a drawing by Amelia Paton.

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that young Miller had the chief part in the production of these periodicals.

Whether the multiplicity of Miller's interests had an injurious effect on his business or not it is impossible to say, but it began to fall off, and about the beginning of the "sixties" he became involved in money difficulties. Rival bookshops had been opened in the town, and having no capital he could not compete with them. By 1866 his trade had so far degenerated that he complied with a desire of his family and retired from it altogether. He left the city in October to join a son in Liverpool. Before quitting Dunfermline he was entertained to a farewell feast by some of his fellow-townsmen and presented with a purse of sovereigns. He was also made the recipient of public gifts from the Baptist congregation and from friends in Limekilns, a neighbouring village with which he had holiday connection, and where he had trained a choir. As a local journal said, "Mr. Miller bore his part like a good citizen in every improvement, was a general favourite whether in public or private life, and carries with him the good wishes of the whole community."

After settling down in Liverpool, Miller became manager of a large stationery business. While he

was in charge one of the workmen proved dishonest and involved the firm in considerable loss. In some way Miller was held responsible for the man's depredations, and a plea at law fixed heavy pecuniary liabilities upon him. This ended his business career and he finally retired. He died January 18, 1883.

One of his sons, George Laing Miller, carries on the printing and writing traditions of the family. He started the printing firm of George Miller & Co., Liverpool, which still exists, although he himself has removed to America. He is the author of several works on musical subjects, and an organist of repute.

HADDINGTON TOWN ARMS.

A BIBLIOGRAPHY

A BIBLIOGRAPHY

THE following Bibliography is divided into three parts :—

I. Books, etc., written or edited by the Millers of Dunbar and Haddington.
II. Books, etc., printed and published at the East Lothian Press.
III. Books, etc., printed and published by the Millers of Dunfermline.

Mere business announcements and catalogues have been excluded from the first division. It has been thought unnecessary to include in the second the many ephemeral prints issued in the course of the Millers' jobbing business. These would have proved of little value even if a complete list of them was possible, and would have obscured the real work done by their press. An indication, however, is given of the multitude of circulars, etc., which they printed in order to advertise their business. The quotations are chiefly from George Miller's unpublished autobiography.

I

WORKS WRITTEN OR EDITED BY THE MILLERS

1791 "In the month of January this year, it is not improbable that I wrote my paper in the *Bee*, I think on the regular payment of small debts, . . . although I cannot point out at the present moment the particular volume in which my juvenile production was inserted."

The first number of the *Bee or Literary Weekly Intelligencer* was published at Edinburgh on December 22, 1790, and the issue of the paper continued till January 21, 1794, when it was withdrawn. It was edited by Dr. James Anderson, a well-known journalist of his day. Miller's essay has not been identified.

1794 An Antidote to Deism, Selected from the Works of a Friend to Religious Liberty, and recommended as a Supplement to Paine's "Age of Reason"; To which is prefixed An Address to the Rational Part of Mankind: and to which are added Four Queries addressed to Confirmed Deists. By a Lover of Truth [George Miller]. . . . Printed in the Year 1794. Price 3d.

Five hundred copies of this pamphlet were printed by James Brown, Bookseller, Duns. See p. 67.

1796 War, a System of Madness and Irreligion; to which is subjoined by way of conclusion, The Dawn of Universal Peace. Wrote on the late Fast-day, March 10th, 1796. By Humanitas [George Miller]. . . . Printed in the year 1796. Price eightpence. 64 pp. 8vo.

This pamphlet was printed by Thomas Ross, Edinburgh, and 500 copies were published. The last two pages are occupied with a poem entitled "Anna's Complaint, or the Miseries of War," by Mrs. Moody. The copy of the pamphlet in the British Museum was presented by the author to the editor of the *Philanthropist* in acknowledgment of his efforts to obtain the abolition of war. See p. 68.

1803 Me and Myself, or Count Handsome the Stout.

1803 Rass Grout, a Parody from "Mungo the Brave and the Fair Imogine" by Lewis.

Two broadside ballads written and printed by George Miller to avenge an insult offered to his wife. They were hawked about the country and had an extensive vogue.

1813 The Cheap Magazine; or Poor Man's Fireside Companion. Vol. I, No. 1. 14th January, 1813. Haddington, Published Monthly by G. Miller & Son, Printers. 12mo. 48 pp. The last number was published December 1814.

The whole was bound up in two volumes with a title-page and preface. The title-page ran:

The Cheap Magazine, a Work of humble Import; yet claiming the Attention of all Ranks, as having for its Object the Prevention of Crimes, and being calculated to ensure the Peace, Comfort, and Security of Society; By alluring the Young and Thoughtless to a Taste for Reading Subjects of real Utility. . . . Consisting of original Communications and select

Extracts. . . . Haddington: printed and published by George Miller and Son, 1813 [and 1814]. 8vo. Vol. I. viii+616 pp. Vol. II. iv+620 pp. Each volume contained a supplementary number. The numbers were frequently reprinted during the succeeding half-dozen years.

In the later numbers miscellaneous articles were considerably curtailed in order to find room for the serial papers, and the little journal is therefore somewhat heavier in appearance. Both volumes contain numerous rough woodcuts illustrating the text.

Many circulars were issued from Miller's press in connection with the appearance of the *Cheap Magazine*. The following are the chief:

1. A preliminary circular to the ministers of East Lothian. 4to, 4 pp. Dated Haddington, July 27, 1812.

2. "Worthy the Attention of All Ranks. A Cheap, Useful and Highly Interesting Publication." A curious circular addressed to the public. It is unfolded, and has on its back a special address to possible agents for the sale of the magazine. If folded, it is 12mo, 8 pp. It is dated September 1812.

3. A notice to Agents regarding the terms of sale wholesale. Dated "E.L. Printing Office, January 14, 1813." 4to, single sheet, printed on one side only.

4. A displayed advertisement of No. I. for exposing in shops. Imprint: Haddington; Printed and Published by G. Miller and Son, for whom Orders are here received. Folio single sheet, printed on one side only.

5. Advertisement for No. VI. 8vo, 8 pp.

7. Circular to Agents, dated September 1813. 4to, single sheet, printed on one side only.

8. Proposed Alterations. To commence with Volume II. of the Cheap Magazine. Dated September 1813. 8vo, a single sheet printed on both sides. The chief alteration in the format was the dropping of the supplementary title, which had proved a source of offence to some, especially in the Highlands.

9. An advertisement announcing publication of Vol. II. No. I. 8vo, 4 pp.

10. An advertisement for No. XIX. 8vo, 4 pp.

11. This Day is Published No. XIX. 4to, single sheet, printed on one side only.

1815 The Monthly Monitor and Philanthropic Museum. For January 1815. Haddington: Printed and Published by G. Miller & Son.

Altogether twelve numbers were issued, the last being that for December 1815. After numbers for six months had appeared they were published in volume form. Many of the numbers were reprinted by James Miller. Each volume was furnished with a title-page and index as well as with a preface. The following is the title-page:

The Monthly Monitor and Philanthropic Museum: being a Cheap Repository for Hints, Suggestions, Facts, and Discoveries, interesting to Humanity; and for Papers of every Description, having a Tendency to Prevent the Commission of Crimes, counteract the Baneful Effects of Pernicious Sentiments and Bad Example; Encourage a Spirit of Industry, Economy, and Frugality among the Middling and Laborious Classes; and Promote the Religious, Moral, Intellectual, and Physical Condition of Man. . . . Haddington: Printed and Published by George Miller and Son. 1815. 12mo. Vol. I. pp. viii+352; Vol. II. pp. iv+356.

Like the *Cheap Magazine* the *Monthly Monitor* was adorned with rough woodcuts. Each volume had a frontispiece. The paper on which the magazine was printed was better, and the contents were intended to be more literary. Like its predecessor the *Monitor* was ushered in by an appropriate "Prospectus."

1815 The Traveller's Guide to Madeira and the West Indies; being a Hieroglyphic Representation of Appearances and Incidents during a Voyage out and homewards, in a Series of Engravings from original drawings taken on the spot, &c., wherein is exhibited an exact Delineation of the principal Objects on the Passage: with a Treatise explanatory of the various figures. . . . To which are added Occasional Notes, &c., by a Young Traveller. Haddington: printed by G. Miller

and Son, for G. Miller, Dunbar. . . . No date. 8vo, 120 pp. With 10 plates and a chart-map of Atlantic Ocean.

This book was probably written by George Miller, jun. (see p. 96). It appeared in two forms, large and small paper, and was published in five parts during 1815. It was priced 5s. 6d. and 7s. 6d.

Its issue was preceded by a two-page prospectus, in which it was stated that in the book a "voyage to the West Indies is divested of its formidable aspect, and made to assume somewhat the appearance of a protracted inland navigation; in which the variegated scenery is beautifully diversified by a number of interesting and alluring objects"!

1819 Verses in Memory of Dunbar Collegiate Church. [Seven lines of quotation.] Edinburgh: Oliver and Boyd, High Street, 1819. 8vo, pp. iv + 40. On p. 40 is "J. Miller, Printer, Haddington."

This poem was issued anonymously, but the authorship was afterwards acknowledged by James Miller, who republished it in his "St. Baldred of the Bass." It was dedicated to the Rev. Dr. Carfrae, the minister of the church at the time of its reconstruction.

1820 The Luckless Drave and Other Poems. By the Author of "Verses in Memory of Dunbar Collegiate Church." [Engraving: Witches riding in storm.] Edinburgh: William Laing, South Bridge; and Macredie & Co., Princes Street. 1820. 8vo, 72 pp.

Contents: (1) The Luckless Drave; notes. (2) Wreck of the "John and Agnes." (3) Shepherd of Lammermoor; notes. (4) Shepherd's song. (5) Mad Woman's Song, altered from Herrick. (6) Additional Gleanings of Witchcraft. The first is dedicated to David White, Rector of Dunbar Grammar School, "by one of his pupils"; the others to John Aitken,

"the author's sincere friend." The book was printed at Haddington by its author, and originally appeared in paper covers, price 2s. 6d. The first three poems were subsequently reprinted in "St. Baldred of the Bass."

1820 The Haddington Register for [1820, etc.]. Contents . . . [Woodcut of Haddington Arms.] East-Lothian Press; Printed by and for James Miller, Haddington: sold by G. Miller, Dunbar, and Oliver and Boyd, Edinburgh. Price sixpence. 12mo. The paging varied from 24 to 48.

This almanac contained the usual information found in county directories. It was compiled by James Miller, and is now usually found bound up with Oliver and Boyd's Edinburgh Almanac.

In 1825 Miller commenced in its pages the Annals of Haddington, which under varying titles, such as "Chronological Account of East Lothian," "Remarkable Events and Memoranda of East Lothian," "Sett of the Burgh," "Extracts from the Records," he continued down to 1845. Occasionally he inserted other articles, *e.g.* in 1825 a poem entitled "Lines to the Memory of the Late David Henderson, Esquire, of St. Germain's." The issue of the Register for 1833–4 contained no imprint, which in 1835 became "G. Neill and Sons." The publication remained in Neill's hands as long as Miller continued writing for it. His articles formed the foundation for his "History of Haddington."

1821 The Affecting History of Tom Bragwell, an Unhappy Young Man . . . with some account of his Companions in iniquity; wherein, are strikingly delineated the Rise, Progress, and Fatal Termination of Juvenile Delinquency. . . . Humbly commended to the Serious Attention of Youth, as well as to the consideration of all Parents, Guardians, Teachers, Masters, and Heads of Families. . . . Haddington: printed at the East

Lothian Press by James Miller, for George Miller, Dunbar, by whom the trade will be supplied. . . . Sold, in London, by Darton & Harvey, Gracechurch Street. 1821. 12mo, pp. i–xii ; 13–200. With frontispiece.

This book appeared first in the *Cheap Magazine*, some omissions and changes being made to render the work suitable for volume form. The author was George Miller, and the book is dedicated to the editor of the *Philanthropist*.

1824 St. Baldred of the Bass, a Pictish Legend ; The Siege of Berwick, a Tragedy ; with other Poems and Ballads, founded on the local traditions of East Lothian and Berwickshire. By James Miller. Edinburgh : sold by Oliver & Boyd, Tweeddale Court ; and Geo. B. Whittaker, London. [Printed by Oliver & Boyd.] 1824. 8vo, pp. viii + 416. With frontispiece drawn and engraved by W. H. Lizars.

See p. 208.

1826 Popular Philosophy : or, the Book of Nature laid open upon Christian Principles, and agreeable to the Lights of Modern Science, and the Progress of new Discovery : being a new, improved, and much enlarged Edition of "The Book of Nature Laid Open in a cursory and popular Survey of several striking facts in Natural History, and in the Phenomena and Constitution of the Universe." . . . By the Editor of "The Cheap Magazine," and "Monthly Monitor." . . Printed for and published by G. Miller, Dunbar. . . [Haddington :

printed by James Miller.] 1826. 2 vols. 12mo, Vol. I. pp. xii + 316, with frontispiece. Vol II. pp. vi + 316, with frontispiece.

Each volume has a separate index. The work was originally published in four parts, and in two qualities of paper. It was finally issued in two volumes or one, in paper boards, price 10s. 6d. or 9s. It was preceded by a prospectus, and followed by at least three sets of testimonials and reviews. The book had a good reception.

1830 The History of Dunbar, from the earliest records to the present period : with a Description of the ancient Castles and picturesque Scenery on the Borders of East Lothian. By James Miller, author of "St. Baldred of the Bass." . . . Published by William Miller, Dunbar, and sold by J. Miller, and G. Neill, Haddington. [Printed by J. Miller.] 1830. 12mo. With vignette half-title, pp. iv + 292.

See p. 215. Originally published in green cloth with paper label, price 4s. 6d.

1833 Latter Struggles in the Journey of Life ; or, the Afternoon of my Days : comprehending chiefly, the Period between my forty-fifth, and the end of my sixtieth Year, being the fourth Book of my Pilgrimage : from, the Retrospections of a Sexagenarian : in which . . . will be found delineated . . . some of the most important Lessons and sublime Maxims of our Christian Philosophy ; not in Examples drawn from fictitious Representations ; or imaginary Characters, existing only in

the Regions of Fancy and Romance; but from the Incidents and Every day Occurrences, of the Latter, and most unfortunate Part of the real Life of a Country Bookseller . . . Edinburgh: Printed by James Colston, for the author,—George Miller, of Dunbar, East Lothian. To whom, or to William Miller, Bookseller there, orders may be addressed. Price eight shillings, done up in cloth. 1833. 8vo, 406 pp., and 2 pp. of abridged testimonials, as Appendix.

This transcript gives but a part of the title-page which runs to the enormous length of 446 words. The dedication to Miller's "Kind Friends and friendly Patrons" is also very long. The "Retrospections of a Sexagenarian" referred to in the title is the autobiography written a few years before, and never printed. The "Latter Struggles" is not a reproduction but a free summary of its contents. The appearance of the book was prepared for by a prospectus.

1835 The Shipwreck of the Czar and other Poems. By James Miller. . . . With Embellishments. [Woodcut]. Leith: Printed for James Burnet, and Neill and Sons, Haddington: Sold also by Oliver and Boyd. . . . W. Miller, Dunbar; and J. Miller, Dunfermline. 1835. Neill and Sons, Printers. 8vo, pp. 8, 5–36.

The preface says that the poems "appeared in a periodical work a few years ago, but the original MS. having been mislaid by a literary friend, it was published in an imperfect form." The journal was *The Dunfermline Literary Magazine* issued by his cousin, John L. Miller.

The volume contained three illustrations, and poems that had already appeared in one fugitive form or another—in the "East Lothian Register" or *The Monthly Monitor*.

1836 Verses to Lord Ramsay on his Marriage with Lady Susan Hay. By James Miller. . . . Edinburgh: Printed by Ballantyne and Company, Paul's Work, Canongate. MDCCCXXXVI. 8vo, 40 pp.

Published in green paper cover, and dedicated to the Countess of Dalhousie.

1837 Verses to Sir T. Buchan Hepburn, Bart., of Smeaton, on the Result of the late Election for the Burghs of Haddington, Jedburgh, Dunbar, Lauder, and North Berwick. By James Miller, author of Verses to Lord Ramsay, &c. . . . Edinburgh: Printed for J. Miller; and sold by the booksellers of Haddington, Dunbar, and Jedburgh. MDCCCXXXVII. 8vo, 24 pp., in a rose cover with printed first page. Dedicated to Major Oliver or Bush and Thomas Aitchison, surgeon, Dunbar. On the last page appears "J. Miller, printer."

The verses were intended to console the candidate on his defeat.

1841 Elegiac Verses in Memory of Robert Ferguson, Esq., of Raith, M.P., Lord-Lieutenant of Fifeshire. By James Miller. . . . Edinburgh: Printed by A. Turnbull & Co., 156, High Street, 1841. 8vo, 16 pp.

1841 Elegiac Verses in Memory of General, the Right Honorable the Earl of Dalhousie, G.C.B., Robert Ferguson, Esq., of Raith, M.P., and other Eminent Men connected with East Lothian. By James Miller. . . . Edinburgh: Printed by A. Turnbull

and Co., 156, High Street. MDCCCXVI. 8vo, pp. iv + 36. Price One Shilling and Sixpence.

The cover carries the same print as the title-page. The poems are dedicated to Lord Elcho.

1841 The Wellington Testimonial. A Lyrical Poem by James Miller.

An advertisement regarding the immediate publication of a poem bearing this title appears on the last page of the "Elegiac Verses in Memory of the Earl of Dalhousie." A copy has not been met with.

1844 The Lamp of Lothian; or, the History of Haddington, in connection with the public affairs of East Lothian and of Scotland, from the Earliest Records to the present period. By James Miller, Author of St. Baldred of the Bass, the History of Dunbar, &c. [Woodcut.] . . . Haddington: Printed and Published by James Allan, and Sold by Oliver and Boyd, Edinburgh. 1844. Large 8vo, 528 pp.

Dedicated to the Earl of Haddington. "Every type of it was set up and every correction preparatory to printing off the sheets, was performed by the author's hand."—Thomas Cowan. See p. 230.

1851 Lament for Delta (David M. Moir, Esq., Surgeon, Musselburgh). Inscribed to John Wilson, Esq., Professor of Moral Philosophy in the University of Edinburgh. By James Miller, Author of . . . Haddington, October 1851. A. Neill, Printer, Haddington. Single sheet, 13½ in. × 8½ in., printed on one side only.

The poem contains 85 lines with notes. One of these says: "The first sketch of this poem was written at Tynningham during a thunderstorm on the 14th August, 1851."

1854 Monody on the late Right Hon. Francis Wemyss-Charteris-Douglas, Earl of Wemyss and March, Lord-Lieutenant of Peeblesshire, &c. Inscribed to the Right Hon. Lord Elcho, M.P., One of the Lords of the Treasury. By James Miller, Author of . . . Haddington, 1854. A. Neill, Printer, Haddington.

Single sheet, 16½ in. × 10½ in., printed on one side only. Twelve four-line verses in one column. With notes.

1855 Verses on the Haddington, Berwickshire, Linlithgow and Peebles Militia Artillery, being embodied at Dunbar under William Hay, Esq., of Dunse Castle, Colonel. March 1855.

No copy has been met with. The note is taken from another print.

1855 Eulogy on the Election of David Roughhead, Esq., of Rosehall, to be Provost of Haddington. By an old Councillor. Haddington, 25th December, 1855. J. Downie, Printer.

The eulogy consists of twelve verses of six lines each, signed "J. Miller." A single sheet of blue paper, 11¾ in. × 8¼ in., printed on one side of paper. This is the only discoverable reference made by James Miller to his membership in the Haddington Town Council.

1857 [Cut of Officer on Horseback, with Bass Rock in the background.] Annual Lyric on the East Lothian and Berwickshire Yeomanry Cavalry going into Quarters at Dunbar, July 1855–56. With a Monody on the late James Maitland Balfour, Esq., of Whittingehame, Major-Commandant. Inscribed to the Right Hon. the Earl of Haddington, K.T., one of the surviving officers

of the original regiment. By James Miller, Author of . . . Haddington, 1857.

A single sheet, 16½ in. × 10½ in., printed on one side only, all enclosed in a double ruled border. The print contains the usual notes. Mr. Balfour was the father of the Rt. Hon. A. J. Balfour, M.P. See p. 237.

1858 [Horseman.] The Revolt in India. Addressed to the East Lothian and Berwickshire Yeomanry Cavalry and Militia Artillery, on the Present Crisis. Dedicated to the Most Noble, The Marquis of Dalhousie, K.T., late Governor-General of India. By James Miller, Author of . . . Haddington, 1858. Printed by A. Neill, Haddington.

A single sheet, 17½ in. × 10 in., printed on one side. The poem consists of 103 lines with notes.

1859 The History of Dunbar, from the Earliest Records to the Present Time. By James Miller, Author of . . . Dunbar: Printed and Published by James Downie. MDCCCLIX. 8vo, 320 pp. With frontispiece, vignette half-title and illustration.

This is a second edition of Miller's book of 1830. It is brought down to date. See p. 216.

1860 Verses to Lieutenant John Jaffray, Dunbar Volunteer Artillery, on his return from visiting the Field of Waterloo, accompanied by William Barclay, Esq. By James Miller, Author of . . . Haddington, 1860. Printed by James Downie, Dunbar.

A single sheet, 15½ in. × 9½ in., printed on one side. Forty-seven lines in double columns, with notes.

1862 "Carmen Triumphalia" on the East Lothian and Berwickshire Yeomanry Cavalry going into Quarters at Dunbar, July 1861. Dedicated to Lieut.-Colonel, the Right Hon. the Earl of Haddington. By James Miller, Author of . . . Haddington, published 1862. J. Downie, Printer, Dunbar.

A single sheet, 16 in. × 10 in., printed on one side of the paper only. Ninety-eight lines with notes.

1900 The Lamp of Lothian; or, the History of Haddington, in connection with the Public Affairs of East Lothian and of Scotland, from the Earliest Records to 1844. New Edition, with Biographical Sketch of the Author. By James Miller, Author of . . . [Woodcut.] . . . Haddington: Printed and Published by William Sinclair. 1900. 4to, pp. xxxii + 236.

This edition is reprinted from the columns of the *Haddington Advertiser* where it appeared in instalments. It is prefixed by a short life of Miller by Mr. Thomas Cowan, stationer in Haddington, who knew the author, and by a prefatory note by Dr. Wallace-James, also of Haddington. The text has been edited to suit the printing exigences of the newspaper in which it was issued, and this has resulted in material changes. Miller's footnotes, *e.g.*, are incorporated in the text and are distinguished by brackets. The book is in double columns with the exception of the prefatory matter.

II

THE EAST LOTHIAN PRESS

V.D. Catalogues of the Millers' Circulating Library.

1789 Miller tells that the first catalogue was "printed by Mr. John Taylor of Berwick-upon-Tweed, under the firm of J. & G. Miller on the 20th of November, 1789."

1790 A second catalogue was issued while the brothers were still in partnership.

1791 "The first catalogue printed on my own account was that published in October 1791."

1792 "On the 23rd of October I see Mr. J. Taylor, Berwick, has charged me 40/6 for printing and paper for Library Catalogues, a copy of which in my own name and containing 1,001 volumes is now before me, with a very suitable address at the end dated September 20th, 1792, under the head in capitals: 'Word to the Public.'"

1806 "Of date the first of October this year I see I published my catalogue of what I entitled the Dunbar and Country New Circulating Library, which, including the Supplements, comprehended in the month of January following upwards of 2,500 volumes, with a promise of having ready by next winter a new catalogue containing upwards of 3,000 volumes.

1808 "The Catalogue of my Circulating Library, containing upwards of three thousand volumes was out before the 1st of October."

1809 Upwards of 3,500 volumes . . . which are lent out at the Dunbar and Country Circulating Library, G. Miller's. . . Haddington: Printed by G. Miller. 1809. 8vo, pp. 160 + 20

1811 Terms of the Agricultural, Commercial, Military Intelligence, News and Reading Room; and of G. Miller's Library . . . High Street, Dunbar: with a Catalogue of the Books. . . . Haddington: Printed by George Miller. Price Eighteenpence. 8vo, pp. 144 + 16.

1812 September 30th. A Supplement to the Circulating Library Catalogue.

1814 Catalogue of the Haddington & County New Circulating Library at G. Miller & Son's . . . East Lothian Printing Office, Haddington. Consisting of 2,500 volumes. . . . Haddington: Printed at the Office of G. Miller and Son, 1814. Price One Shilling and Sixpence.

In connection with the removal of the library to Haddington, Miller issued a quarto circular, making the announcement, and giving the reason for the change. The circular is dated June 1814.

1790 A List of the Names of such Subscribers for this Work as had their Copies delivered by J. and G. Millers, Booksellers in Dunbar.

A 4to sheet with the names in two columns. It is dated "Dunbar, October 28th, 1790," and is probably the first literary announcement issued from the town. There is no indication of the place of printing. It refers to an edition of Knox's "History of the Reformation."

1791 George Miller, Bookseller, Binder, and Stationer.

A small hand-bill issued in October as an advertisement, intimating that Miller had begun business. 300 copies were printed by T. Ross, Edinburgh, at a cost of 3s. In floriated border; size 5½ in. × 4¼ in. See p. 60.

1792 Cheap Books Newly Published.

Probably George Miller's first book advertisement on his own account. It is a 4to sheet printed on one side of the paper only, and without name of printer. It is dated June 8, 1792, and contains the names of five books Miller was ready to sell: a neat Family Bible (Osterwald's) in 24 sixpenny numbers, [the charge he made for binding the parts was 2s. or 2s. 6d.]; Robertson's History of Scotland; Ossian's Poems; a new Geographical and Commercial Grammar; The whole Works of Flavius Josephus.

1795 [?] The Modern Royal Atlas, from the best Authorities. [Figure of "Artificial Sphere."] Published by G. Miller, Dunbar. 4to.

Each map is marked "Published by G. Miller, Dunbar," and several have in addition "S. I. Neele, 352 Strand, London, sculpt." There are 26 maps, two of which are double paged. Three are reproduced in Miller's edition of Brown's "Dictionary of the Bible." The book bears no date, but a date is suggested by the political divisions of the countries included in the atlas. The size is 10¼ in. × 8½ in.

1795 [?] The Shorter Catechism.

This edition had on the front page a cut of Dunbar Castle, the drawing for which was made by George Miller and the block by George Montgomery, with whom Miller had afterwards some trouble.

1795 [?] The Lire and History of the Famous Mother Shipton and Her Daughter Peggy, collected from an Ancient Caledonian Chronicle, in the Scottish Dialect, by Henry Lemoine. 12mo.

1797 The first Circular issued in connection with the proposed "Fund for the Relief of the Widows and Children of Burgh and Parochial Schoolmasters in Scotland." 900 copies were printed.

1798 "Besides our job printing I see that we have done something this year as well as the next in printing Catechisms, 24mo pamphlets, and children's books for the wholesale market."

It is now impossible to identify these products of the Dunbar press. Most of them seem to have disappeared.

1799 "In the months of February and March of this year I seem to have completed 2,000 impressions of each of my first two children's books, as well as

to have been getting on with my assortment or Twenty kinds of 24mo."

It is probable that the eight prints next described belong to this series.

1799 [?] The Little Book of Knowledge, or the Country Man's Choice Companion, containing Signs by which to know the Weather, The Names of the principal Fairs in Scotland . . . The Complete Gardener . . . The Experienced Farrier, Cowleech, Shepherd and Swineherd : . . . Directions for the . . . management of Bees . . . The Vermin Killer . . . And a Catalogue of Things to be known. . . . Dunbar : Printed and Sold by G. Miller, High Street. . . . 12mo, 12 pp. On last page: Printed by G. Miller, High Street, Dunbar.

A pamphlet compiled on the lines of the old "Prognostications."

1799 [?] An Account of Some Imaginary Apparitions, The Effect of Fraud and Fear. From various Authors. . . . Dunbar : Printed for and Sold by G. Miller. . . . 12mo, 24 pp. On the last page are the words : Printed by G. Miller, Dunbar.

Part of this chap is taken from the Life of J. Lackington, the London bookseller.

1799 [?] Comical Sayings of Pady from Cork ; with his Coat Button'd Behind. Being an Elegant Conference betwixt English Tom and Irish Teague ; In three parts. With Pady's humble Petition, or Supplication, and a Creed for Romish Believers. . . . Dunbar : Printed for and Sold by G. Miller. 12mo, 24 pp.

This chap is coarse and scurrilous. Its authorship is ascribed to Dougal Graham, the Glasgow bellman.

1799 An Account of a Dreadful Hurricane, Which happened in the Island of Jamaica, in the month of October, 1780. . . . And of an awful phænomena called a Tornado, which took place, in the Parish of Ednam in Berwickshire, this present year, 1799. To the great Terror of the Spectators who beheld its alarming Aspect. Dunbar: printed for and sold by G. Miller, at whose Shop may be had, a variety of Small Histories, Sermons, &c., Catechisms, Ballads, Children's Books and Pictures, wholesale and retail. No date. 12mo, 24 pp. On last page: "Printed by G. Miller, Dunbar."

1799 [?] An Account of Several Remarkable Earthquakes which have happened in Various Quarters of the World; with the Direful consequences, that have accrued, from those Dreadful Convulsions of Nature, Occasional Shocks of which have been felt in Scotland, within these 13 years. Two so recently, as the months of January and February 1799. Collected from good Authorities. Dunbar: printed for and sold by G. Miller. . . . 12mo, 24 pp.

The accounts are taken from the "Encyclopædia Britannica," Gregory's "Economy of Nature," and the *Scots Magazine*, March 1799.

1799 [?] A Copy of a Remarkable Prophecy, Relative to the Present Times; . . . Lacy's Singular Prophecy, Concerning the French Revolution. . . . Dunbar: Printed for and sold by G. Miller. . . . 12mo, 24 pp.

1799 Montgomerie's The Cherry and the Slae.

1799 Laird of Cool's Ghost.

1800 Miller speaks of Ballads "which I intend printin next week." These would appear to have been ordinary broadsides, and to have included Montgomerie's "The Cherry and the Slae."

1800 The World Turned Upside Down. To which are added, Tarry Woo, The Valiant Sailor, The Collier's bonny Lassie, Bold Sylvia, My Love is but a Lassie yet. [Woodcut—Two lambs.] Printed by G. Miller, High Street, Dunbar. 1800. Last page, "Sold Wholesale by G. Miller, High Street, Dunbar."

"The World Turn'd Upside Down" was a ballad common in London from 1790 onwards. Of the last piece—by Burns—only the first eight lines are printed.

1800 Reading Made Easy.

This edition of a well-known school-book was prepared for Miller by one Inglis, schoolmaster at Innerwick. It was out of press by May. Miller exchanged 900 copies of it with Taylor of Berwick-upon-Tweed for "a small fount of English faced type on a pica body with which I afterwards set up the Proverbs of Solomon."

1800 "I published my first printed Wholesale Catalogue (my former one being in MS.) upon one side of a post folio half sheet and dated, Dunbar July 1800."

This was the beginning of a large number of similar prints which do not require specific mention. In 1802 he published his first Catalogue to the trade, "a full sheet broadside." "A Catalogue of Books, to be offered to a select company of the trade in Metcalf's Tavern, Edinburgh, on Tuesday, the 9th of February 1802, by George Miller, Dunbar. . . ." The catalogue was accompanied by a circular letter.

1800 [?] Proverbs of Solomon.

1800 [?] Shorter Catechism.

Miller was interdicted by the King's Printers from continuing the publication of these books.

1800 "The tidings that Mr. H. had got his *Infant* safe and was very well pleased with both paper and printing."

"Mr. Hutchinson's Infant was a small twopenny book for the use of schools which we had been printing for him."

1801 The Life and most surprising Adventures of Robinson Crusoe, of York, mariner. Who lived Eight and Twenty Years in an uninhabited Island, on the Coast of America, near the mouth of the Great River Oroonoque, Including an Account of His Deliverance thence, and his After Surprising Adventures. With His Vision of the Angelic World. [Daniel Defoe.] An Improved Edition, Illustrated with eight Engravings, from Original designs. To which is annexed, The Remarkable History of Alexander Selkirk; Who lived four years and four months in a state of Solitude on the Island of Juan Fernandez in the Pacific Ocean. Dunbar: printed by, and for, G. Miller. 1801. 12mo, pp. i–iv, 5–238.

The illustrations, says Miller, "were originals in their way and agreeable to my own designing or printing out." They were, however, "drawn and engraved by A. Carse, Edinburgh." The demand for the book was very great, and a "prodigious impression was printed off. 2,500 copies were disposed of in Paisley, and the following orders were received: America, 500; Falkirk, 400; Edinburgh, 800; Glasgow, 500, &c.

"Cheap Tracts"

1802 Reflections on Death, by William Dodd, LL.D., Prebendary of Brecon. . . . A New Edition. Dunbar: Printed by G. Miller. 12mo, 180 pp.

In regard to the frontispiece Miller says: "I was the designer of that plate, or rather A. Carse did it from my directions," and he adds that he intended the book mainly for the London Market. He sent 2,000 copies, of which 1,963 were sold.

1803 Cheap Tracts. Calculated to promote the Interests of Religion, Virtue and Humanity. Vol. I. Price One Shilling Sewed. Dunbar: Published, & Sold by G. Miller. 1803.

This was the general title-page which Miller supplied to the bound volume of the first ten tracts, which had been published at intervals during the preceding year. Each tract bore the general heading on its front page, and this was followed by the special title of the tract. Each tract was separately paged, and was 12mo, 24 pp. The second volume, which has not been seen, was published in the following year. The following is the list of tracts:—

Vol. I.

1. The Magdalen . . . in two letters Written by Herself & published by Dr. Dodd. . . . To which is added The Forsaken Maid's Lamentation.
2. Maria: or The Wanderer Reclaim'd. . . . Wrote by Herself. . . . To which is added The Fatal effects of Guilty Love.
3 The Slave Trade: Being a Display of Some of the Shocking Consequences of that Inhuman Traffic: . . .
4. The Generous Libertine: a Tale. . . . To which are added A Prose and Poetical Translation of Singular Instance of Generosity in a Man, who had bought a Slave. . . .
5. Counsels to Young Men: in a Letter from a Father to his Son. . . .
6. Serious Thoughts for The Living. From Hervey's Meditations among the Tombs. . . .

7. Reflections among the Monuments. Extracted from Meditations among the Tombs, by the Rev. Mr. Hervey. . . .
8. Moral Tales: containing, The Unkind Daughter, The Dutiful Daughter & Grand-Daughter, The Complaining Husbands, and The Desponding Couple, to which is added The Country Lass and Her Milk-Pail. . . .
9. The Drunken Husband: . . . to which is added The Magnanimous Englishmen; . . .
10. True Humanity Usefully Exerted . . . to which is added The Effects of Gratitude Timeously Applied. . . .

Vol. II.

11. The Death-Bed . . . and the Murmurer corrected.
12. Tales of Instruction in Verse and Prose.
13. An Affecting History of an Innkeeper in Normandy.
14. The Honest Debtor: or the Virtuous Man Struggling with . . . Misfortune. . . .
15. Short Stories for Little Folks: or Little Tales calculated to excite Juvenile Minds to the Love and Practice of Virtue. . . .
16. The Power of Affection. Illustrated by Examples. . . .
17. The Little Fabulist, or, Select Fables From Dodsley.
18. The Instructor, containing Reflections and Maxims for the Conduct of Life. . . .
19. An Antidote to Superstition; or a Cure for those Weak Minds which are troubled with the Fear of Ghosts, Witches. . . .
20. An Evening Walk, with Suitable Reflections. . . .

The imprint on each tract ran:—Dunbar: Printed by G. Miller;—at whose Shop may be had a variety of Pamphlets, Ballads, Children's Books, Pictures, Catechisms, &c. Wholesale and Retail. Nos. 11, 12, 13, 17, 18, 19, have not been examined. No. 20 was issued in Feb. 1804.

1803 Three Song Books.

These were illustrated by an Edinburgh engraver. Note has been obtained of the following one only.

1803 The Harmonist: a Collection of Approved Songs; also, Select Masonic Songs. 18mo.

1803 Signals. On the Enemy's Fleet appearing off the Coast, and a debarkation being menaced, between Berwick and Leith, the following signals will be made in addition to the maratime [*sic*] Signals: viz. . . . [Signed, the Earl of] Haddington, Preses, etc. A single sheet, 15in. × 10in. Dated Aug. 1803. Printed by G. Miller, Dunbar.

A well-executed piece of typography.

1803 A Father's Legacy to His Daughters. By the Late Dr. Gregory of Edinburgh. [Woodcut.] Dunbar: Printed by G. Miller. 1803. 12mo, 72 pp.

This volume is by the famous physician whose name is intimately associated with a certain mixture, and who was professor of medicine in Edinburgh from 1724 to 1773. It appears to have been first published in London in 1774. It has a short preface by the author's son. The signatures contain eight and four leaves alternately. The table of contents is on p. 72.

1803 Devout Exercises or the Heart in Meditation and Soliloquy, Prayer and Praise. By the late Pious and Ingenious Mrs. Elizabeth Rowe. Reviewed and Published at her Request, by I. Watts, D.D. Dunbar. Printed and Sold by G. Miller. 1803. 16mo, pp. i–xviii; 19–171. With a frontispiece drawn by A. Carse and engraved by R. Scott. The cut bears "Pubd. by G. Miller, Dunbar."

1805 Religious Courtship.

Probably Daniel Defoe's work, of which many editions were published. One was issued in Edinburgh in 1803. A copy has not been met with.

1805 Under date, April 1805, Miller records that he printed 300 copies of a pamphlet by Robert Brown of Markle, the well-known East Lothian agricultural authority, and editor of the *Farmer's Magazine*. The title of the pamphlet is not given.

1805 The Little Calculator.

This school-book was printed for Miller by T. Oliver, of the firm of Oliver and Boyd, Edinburgh, in a "prodigious impression." It had a large sale in London and in England generally. A copy has not been met with.

1805 The Crook in the Lot: or, the Sovereignty and Wisdom of God in the Afflictions of Men, Displayed: together with A Christian Deportment under them. Being the Substance of Several Sermons on Eccl. vii. 13; Prov. xvi. 19 and 1 Pet. v. 6. By the Revered and Learned Mr. Thomas Boston, Late Minister of the Gospel at Ettrick. . . . Haddington: Printed by George Miller. 1805. 12mo., 192 pp.

1806 The Traveller: or, A Prospect of Society. By Oliver Goldsmith. With a Beautiful Frontispiece . . . cut on Wood by Bewick. Haddington: Printed by and for G. Miller. 1806. 12mo, pp. i–viii; 9–30.

The original green paper covers had on the front page "Goldsmith's Traveller. . . . Price Sixpence." Miller may have acquired the Bewick cut in 1803, for under date October of that year he records that "I appear to have been corresponding with Mr. Catnack of Alnwick about some wooden cuts he had to dispose of."

1807 Life Boat. Single Sheet, 14in. × 6½in. Dated, Dunbar, 21st October, 1807, and with the imprint, "G. Miller, Printer, Haddington."

This address, setting forth the necessity for a lifeboat on the Dunbar coast, was written by George Miller and printed at his own expense. The copy examined is endorsed on the back in Miller's hand-writing: "Original Address. 1,200 copies of which were printed and distributed by G. Miller."

Four other documents were issued in connection with the lifeboat:

1. A circular letter asking that subscribers who had not paid their subscriptions should do so before the month of February 1808.

2. An advertisement headed "Life Boat House."

3. Description of and Instructions for Managing the Lifeboats invented and built by Henry Greathead, Esq., of South Shields, communicated to G. Miller, Bookseller, &c., Dunbar, and by him Reprinted and Distributed for the information of sea-faring men on this part of the coast.

4. Subscriptions Received by the Dunbar Lifeboat Committee, October 1808. 4to, 4 pp. Imprint, "G. Miller, Haddington, Printer." The document is dated Dunbar, November 9, 1808, and contains besides the list of subscribers, the names of the new directors and a note of the first rescue work in which the boat was engaged.

1807 By Desire of Mrs. Hay of Spott, for the benefit of Mrs. Biggs, and the Last Night but Three. Theatre, Dunbar. On Saturday Evening, October 17th, 1807. . . . G. Miller, Printer, Haddington.

A theatre bill, printed on silk, in which "As You Like It," &c., were advertised. Size, 20 in. × 10 in.

Miller frequently did work for the players. In 1802 he records, "Towards the end of this year I recollect that . . . our town was kept in rather a gay state by Graham and Stanfield's company of players, who kept us pretty busy in the article of play-bill printing."

1807 [?] Flowers of the Forest. To which are added, The Battle of Flowdenhill; The Soldier's Adieu; Oh! the Moment was Sad. Begone Dull Care. [Woodcut.] Haddington: Printed by G. Miller. . . . 16mo, 8 pp.

1807 [?] Sea Songs. The Tempest. The Wat'ry Grave. Heaving of the Lead. Far, far at Sea. [Woodcut.] Haddington: Printed by G. Miller. . . . 16mo, 8 pp.

1809 [?] The Battle of Blenheim. To which is added, The Happy Workman. [Woodcut.] Haddington: Printed by George Miller, Bookseller. 12mo, 8 pp.

The title-poem is by Robert Southey.

1809 [?] The Miller of Gloucestershire. To which is added, The Happy Workman. [Woodcut.] Haddington: Printed for the Booksellers. No date. 12mo, 8 pp.

Though no printer's name is given, there can be no doubt that this is by Miller. He was in the habit of substituting "1" for "I" when he ran out of the latter, and this peculiarity is found in this print. The second poem occurs also in "The Battle of Blenheim," and the type shows the same defects in both copies.

1809 [?] The Lothian Lassie. To which are added, My Nanie O. Tink a Tink. The Banks of Doon. [Woodcut.] Haddington: printed by G. Miller. . . . No date. 12mo, 8 pp.

The second and fourth pieces are by Burns, "The Banks of Doon" being largely altered from the received versions. "My Nanie O" has the original word "Stinchar" in place of the more common "Lugar."

1810 [?] Reflections on Death. By William Dodd, LL.D., Late Chaplain to the Magdalen. A New Edition. Haddington: Printed by and for G. Miller and Son. With Frontispiece. 12mo, 143 pp. Price One Shilling.

1810 [?] The Battle of Talavera; or, The Soldier's Threnody. [Woodcut.] Haddington: Printed by G. Miller. . . . No date. 12mo, 8 pp.

The sixth edition of the poem which is by J. W. Croker was published in London in 1810. The battle was fought July 28, 1809.

1811 The Foundling. A Tale, in verse. By Thomas Adams, Royal Artillery Drivers. . . . Haddington: Printed for the Author, by G. Miller, and sold by Hew Scott, Bookseller. 1811. 12mo, 70 pp. With a frontispiece.

This poem in four-line measure went through several editions. A third was published in Kirkcaldy in 1835.

1811 Poems, Sentimental, Moral, and Entertaining. By T. Adams.

On page 70 of the "Foundling" there is an advertisement to the effect that this book was to be issued immediately, in three numbers, 12mo, 72 pp, price 1s.; or the whole work in one volume, price 3s. 6d., stitched. No copy has been met with.

[1804–1812] The History of Two Brothers' Misfortunes; At, and after their Marriage, Simple Simon, And Margery His cruel Wife. And Simple John, The Weaver, and Grizy His Wife, A Thumper. To Which are added, Four excellent Songs.

[Woodcut.] Haddington: Printed by George Miller. . . . No date. 24 pp.

This chapbook was issued some years after the publication of the "Cheap Tracts," but its contents are coarse.

1815 A Complete Concordance to the Holy Scriptures. . . . By Alexander Cruden, M.A. Published by G. Miller, Dunbar.

This book was printed by William Gracie of Berwick-upon-Tweed, and under his canvassing agreement with Miller issued to the latter as the sheets were printed off. It was sent out to subscribers in fortnightly parts at one shilling each. Miller had considerable difficulty with Gracie in procuring the sheets in time. In 1817 he was threatened with its discontinuance altogether, which to Miller was alarming intelligence, for he was depending "so much upon it in completing my exchanges" with other booksellers. The last number was published in June 1817. The appearance of the first part was heralded by a two-page 8vo advertisement in which "the quality of the paper, the beauty of the type and the excellence of the workmanship" are extolled.

1815 The Whole Works of the Late Reverend James Hervey, A.M., Rector of Weston Favel, in Northamptonshire. In Six Volumes. Vol. I. Contents. . . . To which is prefixed A Particular Account of the Life, Character, and Writings of the Author. . . . Berwick: Printed by W. Gracie, for G. Miller, Dunbar and East Lothian Printing-Office, Haddington, 1815. 12mo, pp. i–lvi, 57–392. With a frontispiece drawn by A. Carse, and engraved by R. Scott.

This was also a joint venture of Miller with Gracie under the former's canvassing arrangements. Miller always had great reverence for the works of Hervey, and imitated him in some

of the contributions he made to the *Cheap Magazine*. It would appear that Gracie simply prefixed a title-page with Miller's name upon it to sheets he had already printed. In the preceding year he had sent out the same book with the imprint: "Berwick, printed by W. Gracie, for J. Rennison, Berwick; G. Clark, Aberdeen; and W. Baynes, 54, Paternoster Row, London."

1816 Britain Triumphant! With Other Poems. By an East Lothian ploughman. [Six lines of quotation.] Haddington: Printed for the author by G. Miller and Son. 1816. 8vo, pp. iv+44.

1816 Statement issued by Miller to his creditors. It gives the minute of the first meeting along with a statement of his assets and debts as well as a list of the chief creditors and the proposals made for a settlement. It is signed by William Gracie as preses of the meeting. 4to single sheet, printed on one side only.

1817 Buchan's Domestic Medicine.

A book much used as a home physician. There are many editions. A copy of Miller's edition has not been met with.

1817 The Gospel Mystery of Sanctification opened in Sundry practical Directions, suited especially to the Case of those who Labour under the Guilt and Power of indwelling Sin; also a Sermon on Justification. By the Rev. Walter Marshall. With a Life of the Author. Together with Marshall Improved; Hints concerning the Means of promoting Religion in ourselves or others, and a Sermon on Reconciliation, by the Rev.

James Hervey. . . . Haddington: printed by G. Miller and Son, for G. Miller, Dunbar. 1817. 8vo, pp. 8 (unnumbered); i–xxi, 22–440.

This was a favourite book with George Miller. Early in life he made extracts from it for his own private use. The present edition was prepared for him by Rev. William Ritchie, minister of Athelstaneford, Haddingtonshire, who wrote the life of Marshall prefixed.

1818 Poetical Works of Robert Burns. With an Account of his Life. Embellished with Cuts. Dunbar: Printed by and for G. Miller. 1818. 12mo, pp. 16 + 214.

The life is unsigned.

1818 A Dictionary of the Holy Bible. . . . By the Rev. John Brown, Late Minister of the Gospel at Haddington, and Professor of Divinity under the Associate Synod. With a Life of the Author. A new Edition, carefully revised, and improved with the Author's last Additions and Corrections. In Two Volumes. Dunbar: Printed by and for G. Miller, Dunbar, and East Lothian Printing-Office, Haddington. 1818. 8vo. Vol. I. pp. xxxii+632, with 5 plates (plate i frontispiece portrait of the author). Vol. II. pp. 600+xxxii, with 2 plates.

Before this issue took place Miller had been selling in his canvassing business an edition of the "Dictionary" printed by Gracie of Berwick. In January 1818 Gracie informed him that he could no longer undertake to send him a regular supply, and Miller went to press with an edition of his own. It is evident that its preparation taxed his resources to the utmost, especially in the embarrassed position into which his affairs

had fallen. The concluding part was sent out from the press in December, and Miller remarks: "This certainly had been a heavy work for the Dunbar Press and far too heavy for one in my position."

[1813–18] The Northumberland Lifeboat; to which are added, Anna's Complaint; and The Sluggart. [Woodcut.] Haddington: Printed by G. Miller & Son, Booksellers. No date. 12mo, 8 pp.

1818 Proposals for erecting a new Town House at Dunbar. 4to, 4 pp. G. Miller and Son, Printers, Haddington, 1818.

An appeal for subscriptions for the purpose stated. Pages 2 and 3 are reserved for subscribers' names. Page 4 gives the Resolutions of the Magistrates and Council. The proposal came to nothing.

1818 The Frogs. A Fable. By John Aitken. [Four lines quotation.] Dunbar: Printed by G. Miller, 1818. 12mo, 16 pp.

Plain paper covers. The dedication is: "To Gossips of Every Description within the Borough of Dunbar, this Fable is Humbly Inscribed." The poem occupies pages 9–16. The author was the brother of William Miller's wife. He was the compiler of "The Cabinet or Select Beauties of Literature," in three volumes. He afterwards became the editor of Constable's well-known series of Miscellanies, some of the volumes of which were bound in Miller's Dunbar workshop. He died in February 1833.

1818 [?] The Life and Campaigns of Napoleon Bonaparte (late Emperor of France, &c.) containing Details of his Military Achievements . . . a circumstantial Account of the Decisive Battle of Waterloo; with Particulars of his Exile to St. Helena, Conversations with Dr. Warden, and his Employment in

the Island. Embellished with a portrait. To which is annexed, The Consequences of the French Revolution. [Woodcut of a huzzar.] Haddington: Printed by and for G. Miller and Son. No date. 12mo, pp. 74 + 120.

The second part, which has separate pagination, is in a larger fount of type. Of the first part, pages 51–74 are a reprint of pages 253–289 of "Life of Napoleon" following. The price was 3s. 6d. It has been suggested, without much plausibility, that the book was written by Mrs. Grant of Duthil, the sister of Sir Neil Campbell, who accompanied Napoleon to Elba. Napoleon was still alive when it appeared. The latest date for the book is 1818, for at the close of that year George Miller's name disappears from that of the Haddington firm.

1818 [?] Lives of the most celebrated Admirals and Generals: containing a concise account of the Naval and Military History of Great Britain, and an accurate detail of the Gallant Achievements of her most distinguished Heroes by Land and by Sea. Together with the Life and Campaigns of Napoleon Bonaparte: a Circumstantial Account of the Decisive Battle of Waterloo: with Particulars of Napoleon's Exile to St. Helena, Conversations with Dr. Warden, and his Employment in the Island. Embellished with portraits. To which is added, A Biographical Sketch of the most Celebrated of the French Generals. Haddington. Printed by and for G. Miller & Son. 12mo, pp. [1–4]; 3–300. With Frontispiece.

This book has evidently been tampered with. Two lines of type have been obliterated from the title-page. Pages 3–252 were printed by James Clarke, printer, Edinburgh. An appendix, which carried on the signatures and paging, entitled "Appendix

to the Life of Napoleon Bonaparte," and not mentioned in the title-page, is printed by G. Miller & Son, Haddington. There is only one portrait, and the book contains no Lives of British Admirals and Generals. The text begins at page 3 with "Life of Napoleon Bonaparte." It is apparent that Miller had acquired certain printed sheets, affixed a title-page and appendix, and issued the whole in paper covers.

1820 Minutes of the Managers of the Haddington Dispensary. 1820. Haddington: Printed by James Miller. 8vo, 32 pp.

The minutes which cover the period from Dec. 23rd–Feb. 8, 1820, had to do with a dispute over the staffing of the Dispensary. Two pamphlets were published by Dr. Robert Lewins, who considered himself aggrieved.

(1) Address to the General Body of Contributors to the Haddington Dispensary. By Robert Lewins, M.D. . . . Haddington, 1820.

(2) Strictures on the "Minutes of the Haddington Dispensary, addressed to the Managers. By Robert Lewins, M.D. Edinburgh: Printed by Walker & Greig. 1820.

Both pamphlets were printed by the same firm.

1821 Poems and Songs. By William Sutherland, Langton, Berwickshire. Embellished with Engravings on Wood. . . . Haddington: Printed for the Author. By James Miller. 1821. 12mo, pp. i–x; 11–152.

1821 Allan Ramsay's The Gentle Shepherd.

No copy has been met with.

1822 The History of an Irish Family: in which the unspeakable advantages of a virtuous Education In the Formation of the Human Character are strikingly exemplified. . . . To which is added by way of sequel, The Exemplary Mother; or,

Dutiful Parents and Good Children. By the same Author. . . . Haddington: Printed at the East Lothian Press by James Miller, for George Miller, Dunbar. . . . Sold in London by Darton & Harvey, Grace Church Street. 1822. 12mo, pp. 192. With woodcut frontispiece.

The author of the book was Mrs. Beatrice Grant, and it appeared originally in the *Cheap Magazine*. In volume form it was edited by George Miller, who supplied a preface and one or two footnotes. See p. 159.

1822 Tom Bragwell,—a pirated edition.

In his "Latter Struggles" Miller speaks in very obscure terms of a book which he was preparing being anticipated by an illicit edition issued in London. It is impossible to speak with absolute certainty whether this is the book or not.

1824 The First Report of the Society of the School of Arts in Haddington. May 1824. Printed by James Miller. 8vo, 16 pp.

1825 [?] Second Report of the Committee of the School of Arts in Haddington, For 1824–1825, Being the Fourth Session. Haddington: Printed by James Miller. 8vo, 36 pp.

The third report has not come under observation, but the fourth was printed by John Wood, Haddington. It is dated 1827.

1828 Third Report of the Dunbar Mechanics' Institution, Third Session, 1827–28: To which is affixed the Address of Captain Basil Hall, Royal Navy, F.R.S., to the Annual General Meeting, held 30th Oct., 1828. . . . Haddington: Printed by James Miller. 1821. 12mo, 24 pp.

The Report speaks of a printed catalogue of the library which could be had at the shop of William Miller, bookseller.

Acknowledgment is made of books presented by Mrs. William Miller, George Miller, jun., William Miller, and George Miller, sen. There must have been Reports printed for the two preceding years.

1828 Catalogue of the Books in the Town of Haddington's Library. MDCCCXXVIII. Haddington: Printed by James Miller. 1828. 8vo, pp. i–iv; 1–80. See p. 221.

1831 Regulations of the Haddington Society for Granting Annuities to the Widows of its Members. Established, March 1813. Haddington: Printed by James Miller. 1831. 12mo, 18 pp., in brown paper covers blank.

1831 A Brief View of the Profectic [*sic*] Periods of Daniel and Revelation, with Evidence of its Probable Correctness from the Events of the Last Seventy Years. By an Observer. January MDCCCXXXI. Printed by James Miller, Haddington, 1831. 12mo, 12 pp.

1832 A Brief View, &c.

Another edition of the 1831 pamphlet with certain alterations and additions. 12mo, 12 pp.

1832 Observations on the Human Soul. . . . Printed by James Miller, Haddington. 1832. 12mo, 36 pp.

No indication is given of the author, but he was probably the writer of the last pamphlet also.

N.D. The Cypress: Containing Death, by Dr. Porteus; The Grave, by the Rev. Robert Blair; and The Day of Judgment, by Dr. Glynn. Second edition. Haddington: Printed by and for James Miller. 12mo., 48 pp.

The tract appeared in a blue cover with a printed title and the words "Published by James Miller, Haddington." There was a frontispiece, a woman leaning over a memorial stone, a block used more than once by the Millers.

N.D. A Song Book in which appeared James Miller's song "Bounce Dunbar."

1834 The poetical works of Robert Burns: with An Account of His life, Written expressly for this Edition: and an Enlarged and Corrected Glossary. Dunbar: Published by William Miller, bookseller. James Allan, Printer, East Lothian Printing Office, Haddington. 1834. 12mo, pp. xxvi + 488. With a frontispiece of a scene from the "Jolly Beggars."

The life extends to ten pages, is dated November 1834, is unsigned, and brings the narrative down to the death of Jean Armour in the preceding March. Bound in green cloth with paper label, price 5s.

(FROM TITLE-PAGE OF SUTHERLAND'S "POEMS.")

III. THE DUNFERMLINE PRESS

[A] JOHN MILLER

1809 John Malcolm. The Dunfermline Psalmody: a Select Collection of Sacred Music, &c. 4to, 38 + 2 pp.

A corrected edition, 1810.
Third edition, 40 + 2 pp. 1813.
The Republished Dunfermline Psalmody. 4to. [? Miller.] 1816.

1810 Rev. Henry Fergus. A Short Account of the Law and Institutions of Moses, &c.

1811 The Proverbs of Solomon, with Questions taken from each Chapter, &c.

1812 The Advantage of a General Peace, fairly and dispassionately demonstrated, &c.

1812 Religious Catechism, with forms of Prayer. For the Use of Children. 36 pp.

[1812] List of School Books, &c., sold by John Miller.

1812 An English Collection: or, Pieces in Prose and Poetry, &c., &c. By John Johnstone, Teacher of English, &c., in Dunfermline.

1813 [Andrew Mercer.] Proceedings of a Craw-Court, held in the Woods of Pittencrieff, on Sunday the eighteenth of April, &c. 12 pp.

Second edition, enlarged, 16 pp. 1813.
Third edition, 16 pp. 1813.

1814 Sacred Poetry for Children, on the Greatness, Wisdom, and Goodness of God, &c. By John Miller.

1814 The Baptists Thrown out of the Bible. A Letter, &c. 16 pp.

1814 Rev. David Black, D.D. Edwin and Emma: A Pastoral Tale, in Four Parts.

1815 Catalogue of the Circulating Library of about 1,300 Volumes . . . which are lent out to read by J. Miller, Bookseller and Binder. "Printing-Office opposite the Townhouse."

1815 Rev. John Fernie. A History of the Town and Parish of Dunfermline.

1816 Introduction to the French Language: consisting of Chambaud's Fables, &c., &c. By John Johnstone, of the Academy, Dunfermline.

[1816] Tables of the Dunfermline Prices of Weaving, and Regulations regarding the Patterns, Symbols, &c. 8 pp.

1816 Persecution of Protestants. An Account of the Proceedings of the Catholics against Protestants in the South of France, &c. 16 pp.

1816 [Andrew Mercer.] Proceedings in a Craw-Court, held in the Woods of Pittencrieff, on Sunday the tenth of March 1816. 32 pp.

1817 R. K. Douglas. A Concise History of the Bible, &c., &c.

1817 Rev. David Black, D.D. Early Piety. A Sermon, &c. 34 pp.

1818 A Selection of Favourite Songs for the use of R. Hamilton's Scholars. Printed for R. H. 16 pp.

1818 Rev. J. Beckwith. The Free Agency of Man: being the Substance of a Discourse, &c. 24 pp.

1818 [Rev. John Brown, Haddington.] Two Short Catechisms, mutually connected, &c. 120 pp.

1818 Glorious News! or, the Affecting History of Walter the Soldier. 24 pp.

1818 Rev. John Fernie. Sermons on Important Subjects. Revised and published from his Manuscripts.

1819 The Trial of Antichrist, otherwise the man of Sin, for High Treason against the Son of God, &c.

1819 Andrew Mercer. Dunfermline Abbey: a Poem. With Historical Notes and Illustrations.

1819 Walter Bell. Poems on Various Subjects.

1820 James Rankine. The Dunfermline Songster; being a Selection of the most Fashionable Songs for the Use of Schools. 24mo, 26 pp.

1821 Tables of the Dunfermline Prices of Weaving, &c., &c. 8 pp, 4to.

[1823] Remarks on the Spirit of the Union, &c. Reprinted from the *Scotsman*. 8 pp.

1824 Rev. John Flavel. A Token for Mourners: or, the Advice of Christ to a Distressed Mother, &c.

1824 Contribution of Mr. Mercer to the Anniversary of the Burns Club in 1824. A slip. [? Miller.]

1825 Regulations of the Dunfermline Mechanics' Institution. 3 pp, 4to. [? Miller.]

1825 Catalogue of the Books in the Dunfermline Library. Instituted 26th February 1789.

1826 Cheap Tracts:

No. 1. The Great Importance of Paternal Instruction; with Illustrations.

No. 2. Shipwrecks and Disasters at Sea.

No. 3. A Picture of War; being an Account of the Storming of Badajoz, &c.

No. 4. The Loss of the Comet Steam-boat, &c.

No. 5. Awful Phenomena of Nature. Earthquakes.

No. 6. Awful Phenomena of Nature. Burning Mountains, &c.

No. 8. Book of Knowledge, containing a Gardener's Calendar, &c.

No. 9. The Doctrine of the Cross of Christ stated and improved.

No. 12. The Way to Wealth; or, Poor Richard's Maxims improved, &c.

No. 20. True Religion a source of Happiness.
No. [?] Tales for the Farmers' Ingle-neuk, &c.
No. [?] The Execution ; or, the Affecting History of Tom Bragwell.

1827 The Songster's Garland.

Third edition. 1833.

1827 [Hector McNeill.] Scotland's Skaith ; or, The Sad Effects of Drunkenness exemplified in the History of Will and Jean.

1827 First Report of the Mechanics' Institution.

1827 A Description of about 300 Animals : containing a short and accurate History of remarkable Quadrupeds, &c.

Reprinted in 1833 under the title of "Tales of Animals," with alterations.

1828 Cheap Tracts :
No. 1. A Collection of Notable Things Worth Knowing, &c.
No. 2. A Pennyworth of Wit, &c.
No. 3. A Wonderful Magazine of Strange Adventures, &c.
No. 4. Amusing Stories of Animals, &c.
No. 5. Accidents and Disasters on Land, &c.
No. 6. Shipwrecks and Disasters at Sea ; &c.
No. 7. A Picture of War ; being an account of the Storming of Badajoz, &c. Second edition.
No. 8. An Account of the Dreadful Accident . . . at Kirkcaldy, &c. Second edition.

No. 9. Awful Phenomena of Nature! Snow-storms, &c.

No. 10. Awful Phenomena of Nature! Boiling Fountains in Iceland; &c.

No. 11. The Execution; or, the Affecting History of Tom Bragwell, &c.

No. 12. The Way to Wealth; or Poor Richard's Maxims Improved, &c. Second edition.

No. 13. Deplorable Effects of Heathen Superstition, &c. Second edition.

No. 14. Tales for the Farmers' Ingle-neuk, &c. Second edition.

No. 15. Book of Knowledge, containing a Gardeners' Calendar, &c. Second edition.

No. 16. An Account of the Life of William Burke, &c. (1829.)

No 17. The Interpreter of Dreams and Moles, &c. (1829.)

No. 18. A short Illustration of the Commission given by Jesus Christ to His Apostles. Part First. Second edition.

No. 19. The Same. Part Second. Second edition.

No. 20. The Doctrine of the Cross of Christ stated and improved. Second edition.

No. 21. A Token for Mourners; or, Instructions for improving Afflictive Dispensations; &c. Second edition.

These 21 tracts were issued in volume form with an appropriate title-page, 1829.

1828 The Laws of the Dunfermline Friendly Institution; &c., &c. 20 pp.

1828 Andrew Mercer. The History of Dunfermline, from the earliest Records down to the present Time, &c., &c.

1828 Ebenezer Birrell, Land Surveyor, Dunfermline. Tables of Land Measure; &c., &c.

1829 Sixth Report of the Western District of Fife Bible Society. With an Appendix.

1829 The Dunfermline Register. (Yearly from 1829 to 1865.)

1829 Contract of Co-partnery of the Dunfermline Gas-Light Company. (Instituted November 1828.) 28 pp.

1829. Table of the Customs Belonging to the Town of Inverkeithing. To be Drawn and Exacted by the Town's Tacksman at North Queen's Ferry. s. sh.

[1830] Seventh Report of the Savings Bank in Dunfermline. 4 pp.

1830 Directory for the Town of Dunfermline, &c. First part. 32 pp, 16mo.

1830 Robert Ramsay, Kirkcaldy. The Duty of a Church of Christ to edify itself, defended, &c.

[1831] Political Union, Dunfermline. (Resolutions, Office-bearers, and Report.) Thomas Morrison, Secretary. 4 pp.

1832 The Monthly Scrap Book; a Collection of Amusing, Instructive, and Striking Pieces, &c.

Twelve monthly numbers were issued.

1832 The Gasometer; or, Dunfermline Literary Magazine.

1832 List of Subscriptions for the Prevention of Cholera in Dunfermline, with a Statement, &c.

1832 Lord Dalmeny's Canvass. (A List of Promoters.) s. sh. 4to.

1833 Rev. John Barlas. Statement . . . on the Monthly Missionary Prayer Meeting. 14 pp.

1833 Tales of Animals; being a short History of the most remarkable Quadrupeds; &c.

1834 [?] The History of Wild Beasts in the Caravan: For the Information of little Masters and Misses. 16 pp. in a cover. Price One Half-penny.

[B] JOHN MILLER AND SON

1835 The Monthly Advertiser for the Western District of Fife.

This journal was continued under slightly varying titles until 1863.

1835 Rev. Peter Chalmers. A Parting Word to the Rev. Mr. Law, suggested by his late Catechism. [? Miller.]

1835 Rev. John Law. Catechism for the Rev. P. Chalmers: the Subject of examination being his Pamphlet entitled "An Answer to Mr. Law's Reply" to "Strictures on the Dunfermline Voluntaries." 8 pp.

1835 Rev. John Law. Reply to the Strictures of the Rev. P. Chalmers, on the Recent Sayings and Doings of the Dunfermline Voluntaries. To which is added, &c. 17 pp.

1835 Articles of the Philanthropic Society. 23 pp.

1835 The Melodian : a Selection of Songs, Duetts, and Glees, &c. Part First, 96 pp. Part Second, 96 pp.
Fifth edition, Part Second, 1840.

[1837] Report of the Voluntary Association for the Support of the Poor in the Parish of Dunfermline. 15 pp.

1838 The National Security Savings Bank in Dunfermline. s. sh.

1838 Andrew Mercer. Summer Months among the Mountains. Edinburgh, printed by J. Miller and Son.

1838 Statement by the Weavers' Committee ; detailing their Proceedings in Reference to Wages, since July 1837. 12 pp.

[1838] Apprentice Regulations as Agreed to by the Weavers of Dunfermline, &c. 3 pp.

1839 Fifth Report of the Scientific Association.

1839 Thomas Morrison, Junr. Results of Dr. Chalmers' Church Lecture at Dunfermline ; Thomas Morrison *versus* the Presbytery of Dunfermline. (Part the first.) 8 pp.

1839 [?] Wages Riots, in Dunfermline. 4 pp.

1839 Report of the Committee of Subscribers for relieving the Unemployed Operatives, 1837–8. 15 pp.

1839 Robert Foulis. A Treatise on Gardening, for Cottagers. [? Miller.]

1839 Rev. John Tod Brown. A Letter to the Moderator of the Presbytery of Dunfermline, on the Subject of Church Extension in the Town and Parish of Dunfermline. 8 pp.

1839 Rev. James Blair. A Lecture on the Glory and Spiritual Nature of the Kingdom of Christ.

1840 Rev. James Blair. Scripture *versus* Campbellism ; or, a brief but comprehensive View of the Errors of Mr. Campbell of America and his Followers.

1840 [?] [Children's Books :]
No. 4. Dame Trot and her Cat.
No. 17. New Year's Gift.
No. 21. The Ladder of Learning.
No. 28. The Life of Tom Thumb, &c.
No. 30. The World Turned Upside Down.
No. 31. Men of Different Nations, for the use of Young Travellers.

1841 Rev. James Blair. A Course of Lectures on Christian Baptism, embracing answers to Sermons on Infant Baptism by Mr. Law.

1841 The Reciter's Own : Selections of Choice Pieces, adapted for Recitation. Second edition. Parts First and Second—Sentimental and Comic.

Third edition, Part First—Sentimental, 1848.
Third edition, Part Second—Comic, 1849.

1841 The Minstrel: Select popular Songs, sung in the classes of Messrs. R. Air, J. Halliday, and H. Shields, Dunfermline. 31 pp.

1842 Thomas Morrison, Junr. Appeal by the Committee, in favour of a Subscription to defend Messrs. A. Henderson and T. Morrison, who are committed for Trial, charged with Sedition, Conspiracy, Intimidation, &c. Folio Sheet.

[1843] [Rev. John Tod Brown.] A Brief Reply to "Scotus" the Dominie, by "Torris" the Dissenter. 12 pp.

1843 The Stranger's Companion amid the Antiquities of Dunfermline. 60 pp.

Second edition, 67 pp. 1848.
Third edition, 67 pp. 1851.
Fourth edition, greatly enlarged, 84 pp. 1858.
Fifth edition. 66 pp. 1861.

1843 Fifth Report of the National Security Savings Bank of Dunfermline. 12 pp.

1844 Regulations, Instructions, and By-laws made by the Commissioners . . . for the Royal Burgh of Dunfermline. 16 pp.

1846 Remarks in Vindication of the "United Secession Presbytery of Dunfermline" against the scoffing objections of Sectarian Infidels, &c., &c. [? Miller.]

1846 Joseph Neil Paton, sen. The True Priesthood of the Holy Jerusalem vindicated, and the False Shepherds exposed, in a Letter to a Friend. 39 pp.

[1848] Constitution and Rules of the Mutual Improvement Association.

1848 Joseph Neil Paton, sen. Letter addressed to Mr. Alexander Philip, Minister of the Free Abbey Church, Dunfermline. 10 pp.

1848 Joseph Neil Paton, sen. The Pharisees' Sabbath Exposed; in reply to Mr. Philip, Minister. 23 pp.

1849 List of Ratepayers and Rental of the Burgh and Parish of Dunfermline, surveyed in 1848. 4to.

1851 Catalogue of Free St. Andrew's Church Library, Supplement. 4 pp.

1851 The Dunfermline Register.

[? Miller.] Issued weekly during 1851–2.

1852 [Compiled by Rev. Canon William Bruce.] Hymns, appropriate to the several Seasons of the Ecclesiastical Year. For use in Trinity Episcopal Chapel, Dunfermline. 36 pp.

Another edition, 1859. 44 pp.

1853 Rules of the Bowling Club. 22 pp.

1856 General and Special Rules to be observed in the Elgin Collieries, &c. 16 pp.

1858 A Lay Sermon for the Benefit of Clergy. 8 pp.

1859 [Rev. James Blair.] A Sermon occasioned by the Death of Rev. James Culross [D.D.]. [? Miller.]

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